

Hafa Adai!

KCHC will soon offer patients telemedicine visits. **PAGE 2**

Judge bars US prosecutor from entering Guam court over virus. **PAGE 6**

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1-month CUC bill deferred

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Here's a piece of good news for residential customers of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

To provide temporary financial relief during these difficult times, CUC will be deferring one month's bill for a period

of six months.

"We will not be disconnecting this month," CUC execu-

See CUC on **Page 4**

» CUC board OKs getting \$2.3M from restricted account to give temporary financial relief

\$2 trillion aid package OK'd

By LISA MASCARO, ANDREW TAYLOR, and JONATHAN LEMIRE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP)—The White House and Senate leaders of both parties struck an agreement late Tuesday on a

sweeping \$2 trillion measure to aid workers, businesses and a health care system strained by the rapidly spreading coronavirus outbreak.

The agreement came after days of often intense haggling

See AID on **Page 4**



GHOST TOWN

This intersection that bisects the Imperial Pacific Saipan casino-hotel on one side, the Garapan Elementary School and the DFS T Galleria on the other—considered the heart of Saipan's tourism district—was once one of the busiest crossroads on the island but resembles a ghost town lately, what with the enhanced measures implemented by the CNMI government under the State of Significant Emergency and a State of Public Health Emergency as a precautionary measure against COVID-19.

KRIZEL TUAZON

More photos on **page 7**

Fisherman died of cardiac arrest

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The fisherman who was reported earlier as having drowned near Micro Beach last Friday now appears to have actually died of cardiac

arrest while fishing.

Ariel Maesa, a 50-year-old CNMI local of Filipino descent, died of cardiac arrest while he was spear fishing at Micro Beach last Friday evening, according to his wife, See FISHERMAN on **Page 4**

25 quarantined at Kanoa Resort

AT A GLANCE

As of March 25, 2020

GUAM	
Tested:	270
Negative:	233
Positive:	37
Deaths:	1

CNMI	
Tested:	5
Negative:	5
Positive:	0
Deaths:	0

Source: Joint Information Center—Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

A total of 25 individuals who recently arrived on Saipan from off-island are currently undergoing the 14-day mandatory quarantine at Kanoa Resort in Susupe.

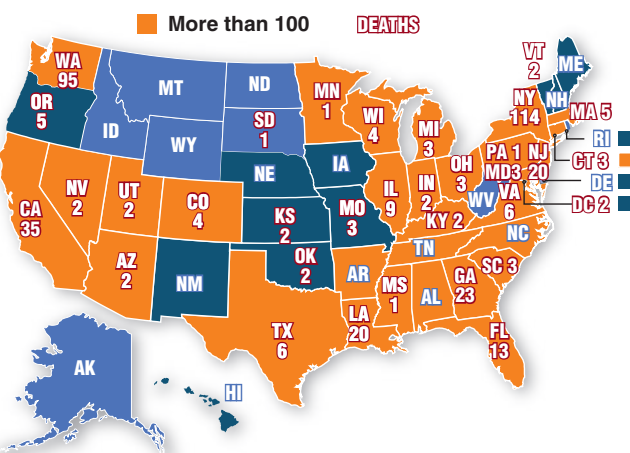
"The governor's COVID-19 Task Force has been diligently working with both airline partners and travelers to ensure the safety of both the travelers and our community from COVID-19," said press

See KANOA on **Page 4**

Coronavirus cases in U.S.

The U.S. death toll from the coronavirus climbed to more than 400, with the number of infections now over 35,000.

1-2 cases 3-9 cases 10-25 cases 25-100 cases



As of 9:45 a.m., ET March 23

Source: AP, Johns Hopkins CSSE
Graphic: Staff, TNS

INSIDE

BUSINESS

The Dow Jones Industrial Average surges to its best day ever since 1933.

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WORLD

For millions in conflict zones, much of what is happening right now is grimly familiar.

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LIFE & STYLE

The Kanye West and Taylor Swift public feud has reignited again.

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Local

KCHC will soon offer patients telemedicine visits

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

Starting March 23, the Kagman Community Health Center will now be able to see patients via online consultation using the video-conferencing tool Zoom.

The health center will continue to see patients in-person, as usual, at the clinic and telemedicine—the use of electronic communications and software to provide clinical services without an in-person visit—is just another option that patients can consider, said Vince Castro, KCHC chief executive officer.

He said this additional feature, will be deployed to “ramp up our efforts to protect patients and providers.”

According to a KCHC statement, anyone can register to be a KCHC registered patient so that they can avail of this option. Patients must have a valid email address in the KCHC system to secure an invitation and link to the telemedicine visit.

KCHC will be communicating with patients via Zoom, which is a video-conferencing program that allows multiple participants. Patients must have a smartphone, tablet, or computer in order to be seen

via Zoom.

KCHC’s telemedicine system integrates the Zoom Healthcare platform right into its Electronic Health Records and meets the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act requirement, which means that patients’ privacy will be honored.

Meeting HIPAA requirements means that there are extra security features that will be taken to establish patient privacy during the video/audio transmission.

KCHC will be sending electronic prescriptions to the pharmacy of the patient’s choice, if needed, during the

telemedicine visit. Additionally, they can call in prescriptions if needed.

If a patient’s telemedicine provider sees that it is necessary to go to KCHC to be physically examined, the patient will be informed during

the virtual visit.

If a patient wants to change their physical visit, depending on the visit, you can call KCHC at 256-5242 to change your appointment into a virtual one.

According to a statement

from the center, it said that its board of directors, management, and staff “are doing everything it can to ensure that patients received quality healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic period.”

PSS complaint served to Torres

By FERGIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Tiberius Mocanu, the counsel for the Public School System and Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada, filed yesterday a proof of service before the Superior Court to show that Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Finance Secretary David Atalig have been served with their complaint over an annual PSS budget issue.

In a declaration, Mocanu said that Elesio Pingal Jr. served Torres and Atalig copies of the complaint and summons, including Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio’s order recusing from presiding over the case, last March 13. He said the Office of the Governor and the Office of the Finance Secretary were both

served sometime before 4pm. He said the Office of the Attorney General’s Civil Division was served at 3:59pm on that same day, March 13.

Saipan Tribune published a story yesterday about PSS’ and Ada’s lack of filing in court of proof of service, citing a source.

Ada and PSS filed the complaint for injunction last March 12.

At this time, the Superior Court has not granted a temporary restraining order in connection with the lawsuit.

Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho on Thursday set a status conference for April 14 at 2:30pm at the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe.

PSS and Ada are suing Torres and Atalig to guarantee for PSS an annual budget of not

less than 25% of the Commonwealth’s general revenue. They accuse Torres and Atalig of violating the NMI Constitution.

Mocanu said Public Law 21-08, which established the Commonwealth government budget for fiscal year 2020, appropriated just \$37,718,904 to PSS, which is approximately 16% of the budget.

He said Torres is in violation of the NMI Constitution because he is carrying out payments and collections under P.L. 21-08.

Mocanu said Atalig is in violation of the NMI Constitution because every allotment and disbursement made pursuant to P.L. 21-08 is unconstitutional.

PSS and Ada asked the court to declare that P.L. 21-08 as modified by Torres is unconstitutional.

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UPDATE

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This project was supported by Grant 7NM700NM5 CFDA 10.557 from USDA and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC). The contents above are solely the responsibility of CHCC and do not necessarily represent the official views of USDA.

Propst questions gaming establishments' operations

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

With two of Guam's confirmed COVID-19 cases traced to a bingo parlor, House

minority leader Rep. Edwin K. Propst (Ind-Saipan) believes there is cause to be concerned about poker parlors that remain open on the islands.

"In Guam, two cases of confirmed coronavirus cases were traced to Hafa Adai Bingo hall," Propst said in a live feed via his social media page. "Guess what? Travel around the island: Poker [arcade] after poker [arcade] are still open..."

Beginning Tuesday, businesses, including casinos, video poker establishments, e-gaming facilities, and others engaged in gaming are

only allowed to operate and open their facilities to the

public from 6am to 1pm, as an added directive to the executive order issued by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres. Social distancing—keeping a distance of at least 6 feet of each other—must also be strictly observed in these facilities.

Propst questions how gaming establishments are protecting the people that congregate in their facilities. "We have to ensure that we're doing the

right thing, that we are looking out for each other. But... when you have poker and other establishments that are still going on, it's not a good

precedent for anybody when we're telling people [to practice] social distancing..." he added.

In Guam, it was reported that Hafa Adai Bingo closed its operations indefinitely for the safety of its customers. The establishment also sanitized its facility daily since the announcement of the three positive COVID-19 cases.

Propst also appealed to

members of the community to cooperate, stressing that the CNMI has the most vulnerable people, with almost 19% already having health problems.

"We have 11,220 of our people whose health are already compromised. Add coronavirus to the equation and we have a medical crisis within the CNMI. ...Think about the others. Isn't that what we're supposed to be doing as a loving, compassionate community?" he said. "We are better than this. We have to ensure that we're better than this. ...We have to cooperate before our government has to do lockdowns, and come in and declare things that we don't want to be done to us."



Propst

REVISED CHURCH HOURS

Editor's Note: Compiled by Chevy Alipio of Saipan Tribune. If you want your church added to this list, call Saipan Tribune at 235-6397 or 235-2440.

■ **Jesus is Lord Church:** No Mass at church. Sunday worship and healing service will be livestreamed on Sunday at 12:30pm and 6:30pm through the official Jesus is Lord Church Saipan Facebook page.

■ **Marianas Christian Church:** No Mass at church. Sunday service will be livestreamed by 8:50am (service begins at 9am via Facebook @marianaschristianchurch. Prayer meeting (every Friday) will be livestreamed by 6:50pm via Facebook (begins at 7pm).

■ **Cornerstone Christian Church:** No Mass at church but livestreamed via Facebook on Sunday at 9am. Tuesday Excel groups (CCC's Bible study groups) will go on via Zoom.

■ **Saipan Community Church:** No Mass at church. Sunday worship will be livestreamed at 10:15am via Facebook on their page.

■ **Iglesia Ni Cristo:** No Mass at church. Worship services are livestreamed via Webex. Dandan: Thursday at 5am and 7:45pm, Sunday at 6:30am and 10am; Garapan: Wednesday and Thursday at 8pm, Saturday at 8pm, Sunday 8am; Koblerville: Wednesday at 7:45pm, Saturday at 7:45pm. Websites are iglesianicristo.net and incmedia.org.

■ **Grace Christian Ministries:** No Mass at church. Navy Hill service will be livestreamed over Grace Christian Assembly-Navy Hill Saipan Facebook page at 9am. The San Antonio service at 10am will be livestreamed on Grace Christian Assembly-South Facebook page.

■ **Filipino Community Church:** No Mass at church. Online Sunday worship service starts at 10am with greetings, testimonies, inspirational songs, and reading the Bible. Wednesday prayer meetings will be online at 7pm. Livestream will be on their Facebook page.

■ **Life in the Son Christian Church:** No Mass at church. Online service will be at 10am on Fb.lifeinthesonsaipan.org.

■ **Upper Room International Ministries:** No Mass at church. Sunday service will be at 11am-11:30am and 7:15pm-7:45pm. Prayer meeting will be at 7:30pm-8pm. All will be livestreamed on Facebook.

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Temporary hours for CUC Customer Center

In light of the amendments to the Second Amended Executive Order 2020-04, Directive 14, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. adjusted

the business hours of its Customer Center effective yesterday, March 25, 2020, until further notice:

■ Cashier/Payments: Monday to

Friday: 8am to 1pm

■ Customer Service: Monday to

Friday: 8am to 1pm

The Customer Center will only be

entertaining critical transactions from its customers as follows:

1. Payment and token purchases
2. Reconnections (existing connections)
3. Prepay meter applications (for online/web-based meters)

4. Termination of service(s)

CUC reminds its customers to follow the COVID-19 prevention measures when entering the Customer Center as this was put in place to protect our customers and our employees. **(PR)**

AID

From Page 1

and mounting pressure and still needed to be finalized in detailed legislative language.

Top White House aide Eric Ueland announced the agreement in a Capitol hallway shortly after midnight. “Ladies and gentlemen, we are done. We have a deal,” Ueland said.

The unprecedented economic rescue package would give direct payments to most Americans, expand unemployment benefits and provide a \$367 billion program for small businesses to keep making payroll while workers are forced to stay home.

The final details had proved nettlesome. One of the last issues to close concerned \$500 billion for guaranteed, subsidized loans to larger industries, including a fight over how generous to be with the airlines. Hospitals would get significant help as well.

The package was aimed to combat what Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell had called “the most serious threat to Americans’ health in over a century and quite likely the greatest risk to America’s jobs and prosperity that we’ve seen since the Great Depression.”

Yet even as the public-health crisis

deepened, President Donald Trump expressed eagerness to nudge many people back to work in coming weeks and held out a prospect, based more on hope than science, that the country could be returning to normal in less than a month.

“We have to go back to work, much sooner than people thought,” Trump told a Fox News town hall. He said he’d like to have the country “opened up and just raring to go” by Easter, April 12. But in a White House briefing later, Trump said “our decision will be based on hard facts and data.”

Medical professionals say social distancing needs to be stepped up, not relaxed, to slow the spread of infections. At the White House briefing, the public-health authorities said it was particularly important for people in the hard-hit New York City metropolitan area to quarantine themselves for 14 days, and for those who have recently left the city to do the same.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government’s top infectious disease expert, said pointedly at the briefing, “No one is going to want to tone down anything when you see what is going on in a place like New York City.”

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and congressional leaders engaged in final negotiations Tuesday after a tumultuous but productive

day Monday. While the two sides had resolved many issues in the sweeping package, some sticking points remained.

“We’re trying to finalize all the documents, going through a lot of complicated issues, and we’re making a lot of progress,” Mnuchin said earlier Tuesday.

Ravaged in recent days, stocks rocketed as negotiators signaled a resolution was in sight.

At issue in the Capitol was an unprecedented economic rescue package. A one-time payment of \$1,200 per adult and \$500 per child would go directly to the public. A huge cash infusion for hospitals expecting a flood of COVID-19 patients grew during the talks at the insistence of Sen. Chuck Schumer, the Democratic leader, while Republicans pressed for tens of billions of dollars for additional relief to be delivered through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the lead federal disaster agency.

Democrats said the package would help replace the salary of furloughed workers for four months, rather than the three months first proposed. Furloughed workers would get whatever amount a state usually provides for unemployment, plus a \$600 per week add-on, with gig workers like Uber drivers covered for the first time.

ers during this period, Deleon Guerrero said.

Board chair Miranda V. Manglona, Matthew Holley, and Jovita Paulino agreed with Deleon Guerrero and voted “yes.” Only Commonwealth Development Authority board chair Ignacio Perez voted against it, saying, among other things, that he needs to see a second opinion from the Office of the Public Auditor and other documents to state that this is the right way to “unrestrict” the \$2.3 million.

The board also unanimously approved Deleon Guerrero’s motion to approve a temporary waiver for penalties, late fees, and disconnection period within the deferral periods.

Deleon Guerrero asked the CUC management to make available financial documents showing what the impact the deferral program will have on the residential side, and what funds are needed for the commercial businesses to allow them a 15-day deferment during this COVID-19 situation.

Camacho said they would provide such documentation.

Camacho said he can already tell from his understanding that it’s about \$2 million additional for the commercial accounts at 15 days.

The board meeting yesterday lasted over four hours, during which Paulino questioned Perez’s “no” vote. “I mean, you already heard from the legal counsel [Jose Mafnas Jr.] and the legal counsel works not only for CUC, but he’s with the Office of the Attorney General,” Paulino said, adding that they also heard

from CUC’s chief financial officer, who is qualified and has the experience and knowledge, as well as from the CUC management.

“What...second opinion is he asking for?” Paulino asked, adding that not too many people have the luxury of paying their bills on time during this difficult period.

Paulino said she does not want to prolong this deferral issue because this will benefit those who are on austerity and for some who are even not working. “What about the well-being of our people?” she asked.

For his part, Holley said that if Perez is only concerned about the documents, he’s ready to vote on the matter.

In an interview, Camacho said he met with Gov. Ralph DLG Torres last week and that the governor asked if CUC can find some means to assist people, particularly the residential customers of the CNMI, during this challenging time. “And I couldn’t agree with him more. These are very difficult times,” Camacho said.

He said CUC does not have the ability to waive the charges so the most that they can do is to defer the payment. He said he is glad that the board supported the management’s request.

“We’ll be informing the community that we will not be disconnecting and any payment they can use, any dollar amounts that they have now, they can use [for other expenses]. And then we’ll be able to provide up to six months for people to pay this month’s billing,” he said.

Companies would be able to defer payment of the 6.2% Social Security payroll tax.

Opening the Senate on Tuesday,

FISHERMAN

From Page 1

citing information given her by the Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

Maesa’s wife told *Saipan Tribune* that her husband was not drunk on the night of his death and was a licensed diver, certified in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, and an experienced fisherman, so she knew that it was impossible that he died by drowning.

“My husband was a good man. He [didn’t] drink, and he [had] no vices. He was also a licensed diver and had a lot of experience in spear fishing since he had been doing it since we were on Rota. The night of his death was the first time he went fishing here on Saipan,” she said.

Her hunch proved right when CHCC confirmed yesterday that the cause of Maesa’s death was not drowning, but cardiac arrest.

According to Maesa’s wife, Maesa was with three other fishermen, one of whom was his co-worker, on the night of her husband’s death.

Maesa’s wife said that she dropped off her husband at the fishing site at Micro Beach where Maesa and his companions had agreed to meet and that she waited at the Garapan Fishing Base at around 10pm where her husband said they would end up.

At around 10:48pm, she received a call on her husband’s cell phone asking where she was and if she was Maesa’s wife, and was informed that

her husband had been brought to the emergency room but could not disclose over the phone why.

On the way to the Commonwealth Health Center, the wife said that she tried to reach out to her husband’s co-worker who had accompanied him to fish but she did not get a response. She later learned that they were still being questioned by police.

Police later called again and confirmed that her husband had been pronounced dead.

Upon arriving at CHC, nurses and doctors informed her that they did all they could, but he was dead on arrival.

Maesa’s body remains at the CHC morgue because funeral arrangements can’t be made due to the current government shutdown.

The following day, Saturday, Maesa’s wife was able to speak with her husband’s fishing companions and they informed her that they did not know exactly what happened to Maesa. All they remember was seeing him face down in the water, unresponsive.

Maesa’s wife said his companions were about 5 to 10 meters apart from each other and were depending on flashlight signals and they knew something was wrong when Maesa was no longer responding to their signals.

Maesa’s companions searched for him and worked together to pull him to shore while one called for help via cellphone.

CUC

From Page 1

tive director Gary P. Camacho said in an interview yesterday.

This does not mean that charges will be waived; it only means that one month’s billing payment will be deferred for up to six months. Those who can afford to continue paying their bills have the option either to pay now or defer payment.

Camacho said they will be putting out an advisory explaining the details of this program.

“For the people that have already paid this month, they may not pay next month. So it will be applicable for this month and next month. For now, it’s one month per customer or per account,” Camacho said.

This developed as the CUC board of directors approved on a 4-1 vote the management’s request to allow it to tap \$2.3 million in a restricted account—that was originally intended to buy a power engine—to provide temporary financial relief to CUC residential customers.

CUC will use the \$2.3 million to maintain operations during the deferral period of six months.

In introducing the motion, board vice chair Weston Deleon Guerrero noted that CUC’s monthly collections normally funds CUC operations. However, due to the circumstances caused by COVID-19 situation in the CNMI, the management’s action is reasonable and necessary for CUC to maintain operations and provide assistance to its residential custom-

KANOA

From Page 1

secretary Kevin Bautista.

He said all 25 “guests” at Kanoa Resort are being fed three meals a day, monitored for symptoms through the Commonwealth Health Care Corp.’s text illness monitoring system and medical professionals, while also ensuring that their privacy is respected.

Saipan Tribune learned that tenants are being “screened” every day for 30 minutes before and after their recreation time—an activity that is often done for enjoyment, amusement, or pleasure, and are considered to be fun. Screening involved a temperature check.

Additionally, their rooms have been wiped and sanitized, leaving just a bed, a television, and other furniture that can’t be removed due to them being attached to the wall.

In addition, food deliveries and gifts from family members and others of the tenants are being honored, but they cannot have any physical contact with tenants.

“These protective measures are important to prevent the spread of COVID-19 into the CNMI,” said

Bautista.

The first isolation area identified by the governor’s COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC was Century Hotel in Garapan.

According to Esther Muña, CHCC chief executive officer, governments all over the world, especially in the U.S., turn to hotels as facilities they can use to isolate those who may be infected by the virus to avoid overcrowding hospitals. This is also ideal for health care workers to focus on people who need immediate care.

According to *Pacific Daily News*, Linda DeNorcey, Guam Public Health and Social Services director, out of the 32 people who have tested positive for COVID-19 in Guam, there are 21 people who are in stable condition and recovering at home while 10 are hospitalized.

Of the patients who are hospitalized, eight are at the Guam Memorial Hospital, one of whom is in the intensive care unit, and two patients are at the Skilled Nursing Unit of GMH.

Guam saw its first death from COVID-19 complications last March 22.

Of Guam’s COVID-19 cases, six patients have travelled to the Philippines, one has travelled to Japan, one has travelled to the United States, and 24 have no travel history.

Torres: 'No student should go hungry'

The government is making sure that CNMI students remain well-fed, despite the closure of schools, through the meal distribution program called Grab&Go, where parents pick up the meals intended for students.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres joined Board of Educa-

tion chair Janice Tenorio and Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada yesterday at the Saipan Southern High School to check on the first day of the program's implementation.

"No student should go hungry, especially during times like these," Torres said. "Our administration and our COV-

ID-19 Task Force are assisting the CNMI Public School System and their food vendors in this distribution effort. We are committed to remaining Marianas Strong."

Following the Public School System's transition to distance education and the schools being closed for the remainder of the school year, the Office of the Governor, the COVID-19 Task Force, and PSS' Child Nutrition Program

collaborated to ensure that over 10,000 eligible children in the Marianas could get their school meals.

Under CNMI's Grab&Go, every child, ages 18 and below, is provided with one meal set—breakfast, lunch, and snack—that parents will then get from designated pick-up sites. That means parents and guardians have one less thing to worry about, at least in terms of meals for the chil-

dren, during this pandemic.

"Please only go out for quick trips to the grocery store for essentials and to pick up food. There is no need to panic-buy, Marianas. We are all in this together," Torres added.

Rep. Tina Sablan (Ind-Saipan) has asked parents to be kind to the men and women who keep the Grab&Go program going.

"Please be extra kind to all the staff who are working

hard, and under very stressful conditions, to get this program up and running so that all of the CNMI's children can get nutritious meals every day during this public health emergency and not go to bed hungry," Sablan said.

The Grab&Go meals can be picked up Monday to Friday, from 9:30 to 10:30am. People are advised to observe social distancing when picking meals. *(Iva Maurin)*

US military trainings set

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. Navy will conduct training at Warning Area 13 from March 30 to April 2, from 12:05am to 11:55pm.

The island of Farallon de Medinilla lies within Warning Area 13. Therefore, mariners are advised to remain clear 12 nautical miles from Farallon de Medinilla for the duration of the exercise, and to monitor the U.S. Coast Guard broadcast Notice to Mariners for advisories.

Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 will hold open ocean training on March 30 from 4pm to 9:30pm at the following coordinates: 13°26'N/145°08'E, 13°42'N/144°36'E.

Mariners are requested to remain clear 5 nautical miles from the area during the stated date and time, and to monitor the U.S. Coast Guard broadcast No-

tice to Mariners for advisories.

The U.S. Navy will conduct training in the following locations at the following dates and times:

■ Agat Bay and outer Apra Harbor: March 30 to April 2, from 4pm to 9:30pm

■ Warning Area 517: April 1, from 4pm to 9:30pm
n Outer Apra Harbor: April 2, from 8am to 4pm

The public, fishermen, and marine tour operators are requested to remain clear of the areas during the stated dates and times, and to monitor the U.S. Coast Guard broadcast Notice to Mariners for advisories.

These trainings support readiness and are critical to developing the skills needed to respond to operational missions throughout the region to ensure a stable, free, and open Indo-Pacific. *(PR)*

Sailors suspected of COVID-19 medically evacuated to Guam

ASAN, Guam—On March 25, sailors with test results indicative of coronavirus disease 2019, or COVID-19, were medically evacuated from the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* to Guam. The four were taken to U.S. Naval Hospital Guam for evaluation and treatment.

Surveillance testing of the four sailors conducted on March 24 was indicative of COVID-19. The individuals were isolated in accordance with guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention until the sailors could be flown off the ship.

Joint Region Marianas has

been working in cooperation with the Guam government to ensure proper advance notification of the patients' arrival on Guam. The patients will be treated at U.S. Naval Hospital Guam and will be isolated at U.S. Naval Base Guam in accordance with CDC protocols.

"U.S. Pacific Fleet is committed to taking every measure possible to protect the health of our force, to prevent the spread of the virus, and to ensure continued cooperation with the government of Guam in our COVID-19 response," stated a Joint Region Marianas press release yesterday. *(PR)*

'No international flights gives NMI fighting chance vs COVID-19 virus'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The suspension of all international flights to the CNMI will surely impact the Commonwealth Ports Authority's finances and the Commonwealth's economy, but Barrie C. Toves believes that the health and safety of the CNMI's people must be protected.

In fact, it will give the CNMI a fighting chance against the COVID-19 coronavirus, said Toves, who chairs the CPA board's Airport Facilities Committee.

He said the CNMI can now divert its focus and energy on building up its defense, resources, and capabilities to fight the virus on the ground within its borders and without worrying about undetected transmissions from international sources.

Toves noted that the CNMI's neighboring island of Guam has already report-

ed an increasing number of confirmed COVID-19 cases and one fatality. "This is very alarming because the virus is already close to our borders, if it is not already here undetected," he said.

Toves encouraged people to adhere to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' executive order and directives aimed at preventing the spread of the

virus. That includes "social distancing" and limited business operations.

"We're all in this together and we must fight this invisible enemy together. Stay home to help protect the CNMI," Toves said.

Skymark Airlines Inc.'s last flights between Saipan and Japan were yesterday. Once the outbound flight

flew out, it temporarily closed the CNMI's door to international flights.

Skymark's Saipan-Narita, Narita-Saipan operations will resume on May 10, 2020. This leaves only United Airlines doing flights between Saipan and Guam in the morning four days a week. Interisland flights via Star Marianas continue.

Tsunami watch for Hawaii lifted after north Pacific quake

MOSCOW (AP)—A 7.5 magnitude earthquake struck in the northern Pacific on Wednesday and forecasters said tsunami waves were possible for the nearest shores. A brief tsunami watch for Hawaii was canceled.

The quake struck 219 kilometers (136 miles) south-southeast of Severo on Russia's far eastern Kuril

Islands, the U.S. Geological Survey said. It was 56 kilometers (37 miles) deep.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center initially warned hazardous waves were possible in parts of the Kurils, but later said based on further analysis that waves of less than 30 centimeters (a foot) above tide level were possible in the northern Pacific. It noted that

the wave height and potential hazard may vary by geography and other local features.

A tsunami watch issued for Hawaii was halted shortly afterward.

The Japan Meteorological Agency said the quake was a stronger 7.8 magnitude and may cause a slight change of sea levels around Japanese coasts.



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-19-028, REV.1

REPLACEMENT OF SADOG TASI WWTP CLARIFIER

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Replacement of Sadog Tasi Clarifier Replacement in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The intent of the contract is for the Contractor to provide all labor, equipment, supplies and materials necessary to complete the scope of work which consists of installation of a new circular clarifier mechanism and replacement or repair of the effluent launder box; removal of the old circular clarifier mechanism and sections of the effluent launder box; replacement of the RFP weirs and scum baffle, installation of a new outer scum baffle; installation of new area lighting, wires, and conduit, and disconnect boxes; installation of a new process water spray system for foam control. The work shall include the dewatering and cleaning of aeration basin #3 and the clarifier; routing process flow and maintaining conditions during the construction period; and returning process flow from the aeration basin to the clarifier. The work shall be completed with minimal disruption to the daily operation of the Sadog Tasi Waste Water Treatment Plant. CUC requires the Project to be completed in 365 calendar days from date of award of contract.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **March 12, 2020 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) Original and Five (5) Hard Copies of the bid MUST be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-19-028, Rev.1 Replacement of the Sadog Tasi Clarifier" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) April 2, 2020**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract. All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 a.m. (ChST) on March 16, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Christie Sablan, CUC P&S, Purchasing Technician, Senior via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN, JR.
Purchasing Administrator

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Judge bars US prosecutor from entering Guam court over virus

HAGATNA, Guam (AP)—A federal judge issued a ruling prohibiting a U.S. prosecutor from entering a district court-

house in Guam because of concerns over the spread of the coronavirus.

Federal Public Defender

John Gorman requested that U.S. Attorney Shawn Anderson be barred from entering the court in Hagatna, Pacific

Daily News reported Monday.

Chief Judge Frances Tydingco-Goate ordered that anyone who has traveled out-

side of Guam over the previous 14 days should not be allowed in the courthouse.

Gorman said Anderson recently returned to the U.S. territory from a vacation trip to Thailand, which the judge's ruling noted Anderson did not deny.

"He has by now, gone into the U.S. Attorneys office and/or met with various U.S. Attorneys staff. He has willfully broken the quarantine and potentially infected that entire office," Gorman wrote in his request.

Anderson did not have contact with any staff members and was prepared to work remotely, he said, adding that he did not travel to a "high-risk country" and does not have any symptoms of COVID-19.

For most people, the coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms. But for the elderly and people with ex-

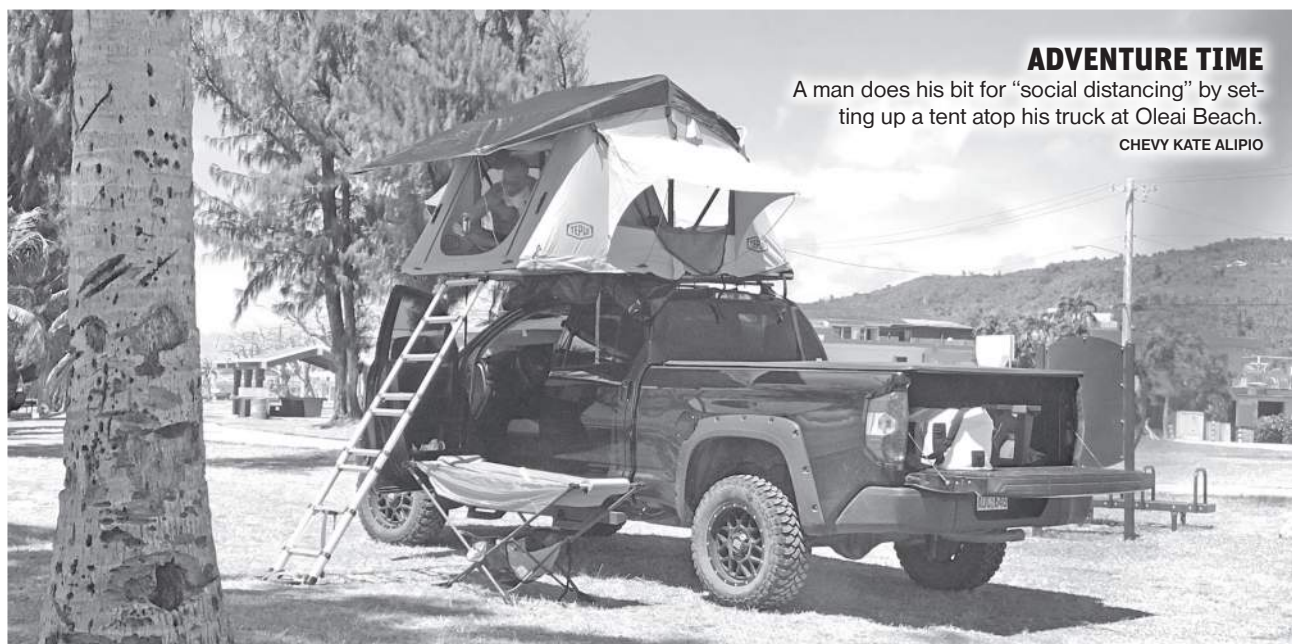
isting conditions, it can cause more severe illness. The vast majority of those who are infected recover.

Guam had 29 confirmed cases of the virus and one death as of Monday, officials said.

The judge denied Gorman's request that Anderson's staff be banned from the court building, where the U.S. attorney's office is located.

"There is no legal or medical basis to quarantine our entire staff," Anderson wrote in response to the request. "No USAO employee has had personal contact with me since my return to Guam."

The judge also placed a court prohibition on people who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, those who have had contact with an infected person, people who have flu-like symptoms and anyone who has been asked to self-quarantine.



ADVENTURE TIME

A man does his bit for "social distancing" by setting up a tent atop his truck at Oleai Beach.

CHEVY KATE ALIPIO

SBA disaster aid for NMI's small businesses

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—

The U.S. Small Business Administration is offering low-interest federal disaster loans for working capital to Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands small businesses suffering substantial economic injury as a result of COVID-19, SBA administrator Jovita Carranza announced. SBA acted under its own authority, as provided by the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act that was recently signed by the President, to declare a disaster following a request received from Gov. Ralph DLG Torres on March 19, 2020.

The disaster declaration makes SBA assistance available in the entire CNMI.

"SBA is strongly committed to providing the most effective and customer-focused response

possible to assist CNMI small businesses with federal disaster loans. We will be swift in our efforts to help these small businesses recover from the financial impacts of the coronavirus," said Carranza.

SBA customer service representatives will be available to answer questions about SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan program and explain the application process.

"Small businesses, private non-profit organizations of any size, small agricultural cooperatives and small aquaculture enterprises that have been financially impacted as a direct result of the coronavirus since Jan. 31, 2020, may qualify for Economic Injury Disaster Loans of up to \$2 million to help meet financial obligations and operating expenses which could have been met had the disaster not

occurred," said Carranza.

"These loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that can't be paid because of the disaster's impact. Disaster loans can provide vital economic assistance to small businesses to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue they are experiencing," Carranza added.

Eligibility for Economic Injury Disaster Loans is based on the financial impact of COVID-19. The interest rate is 3.75% for small businesses. The interest rate for private non-profit organizations is 2.75%. SBA offers loans with long-term repayments in order to keep payments affordable, up to a maximum of 30 years and are available to entities without the financial ability to offset the adverse impact without hardship.

Applicants may apply online, receive additional di-

saster assistance information and download applications at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>. Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for more information on SBA disaster assistance.

Individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing may call (800) 877-8339. Completed applications should be mailed to U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

The deadline to apply for an Economic Injury Disaster Loan is Dec. 21, 2020.

For more information about coronavirus, visit: coronavirus.gov. For more information about available SBA resources and services, visit: SBA.gov/coronavirus. (PR)

Inaccurate report of COVID-19 cases at Naval Hospital Guam

ASAN, Guam—The report of four confirmed positive COVID-19 test results at U.S. Naval Hospital Guam was inaccurate. There are currently no positive COVID-19 cases at U.S. Naval Hospital Guam.

"Regrettably, the report of four confirmed COVID-19 cases at U.S. Naval Hospital Guam was made in error. Naval Hospital Guam has tested numerous personnel in conjunction with the Naval Health Research Center in San Diego," said Lt. Cmdr. Rick Moore, Joint Region Marianas spokesperson. "We continue to work hand-in-hand with the government of Guam and the Department of Public Health and Social Services, to include timely notification of any sus-

pected or confirmed cases."

U.S. Naval Hospital Guam commanding officer Capt. Maria Young commented on the erroneous report and clarified that there are no current cases of COVID-19 at the naval hospital.

"We regret the confusion caused by this misreport. I would like to set the record straight that there are no active cases of COVID-19 at U.S. Naval Hospital Guam. There are two DoD-affiliated cases who were tested by DPHSS and previously reported by the Government of Guam Joint Information Center. Both of those patients are currently in DPHSS-monitored home isolation in accordance with CDC guidelines," said Young. (PR)

Revised hours at FHB Saipan branches

All First Hawaiian Bank branches on Saipan are temporarily open from 9am to 1pm starting last Tuesday, March 24, pursuant to the Second Amended Executive Order 2020-04 issued by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres. Customer account access is still available 24/7 through FHB Online, FHB Mobile, ATMs and the Call Center at 235-3090.

To protect the health and safety of its employees and customers, First Hawaiian Bank staff will continue to practice hygiene and social distancing behaviors, which include limiting the number of customers within the branch and asking that customers maintain six feet distance between one another. The branches will continue to have enhanced cleaning and sanitization of all public areas, work stations and frequently touched surfaces in

accordance with recommended guidance from local health department and the Centers for Disease Control.

Customers are also encouraged to consider alternative convenient banking options such as online and mobile banking for mobile deposits, making transfers, paying bills and viewing account balances. To enroll for Online and Mobile Banking, visit www.fhb.com/enroll.

Recognizing that this situation is rapidly evolving and to help its customers stay informed, the bank has created a web page with current updates on available banking services, what customers can do to prepare financially, as well as links to health and safety resources that provide guidelines on how to prevent community spread of the virus at www.fhb.com/COVID19. (PR)



CPA BOARD MEETING

Commonwealth Ports Authority executive director Christopher S. Tenorio, middle, explains the CPA management's position regarding the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s plan to reactivate Power Plant 3 in Isley Field during a recent CPA board's Airport Facilities Committee meeting. Also in the photo are board members Pete Reyes, extreme left, and Ramon Tebuteb.

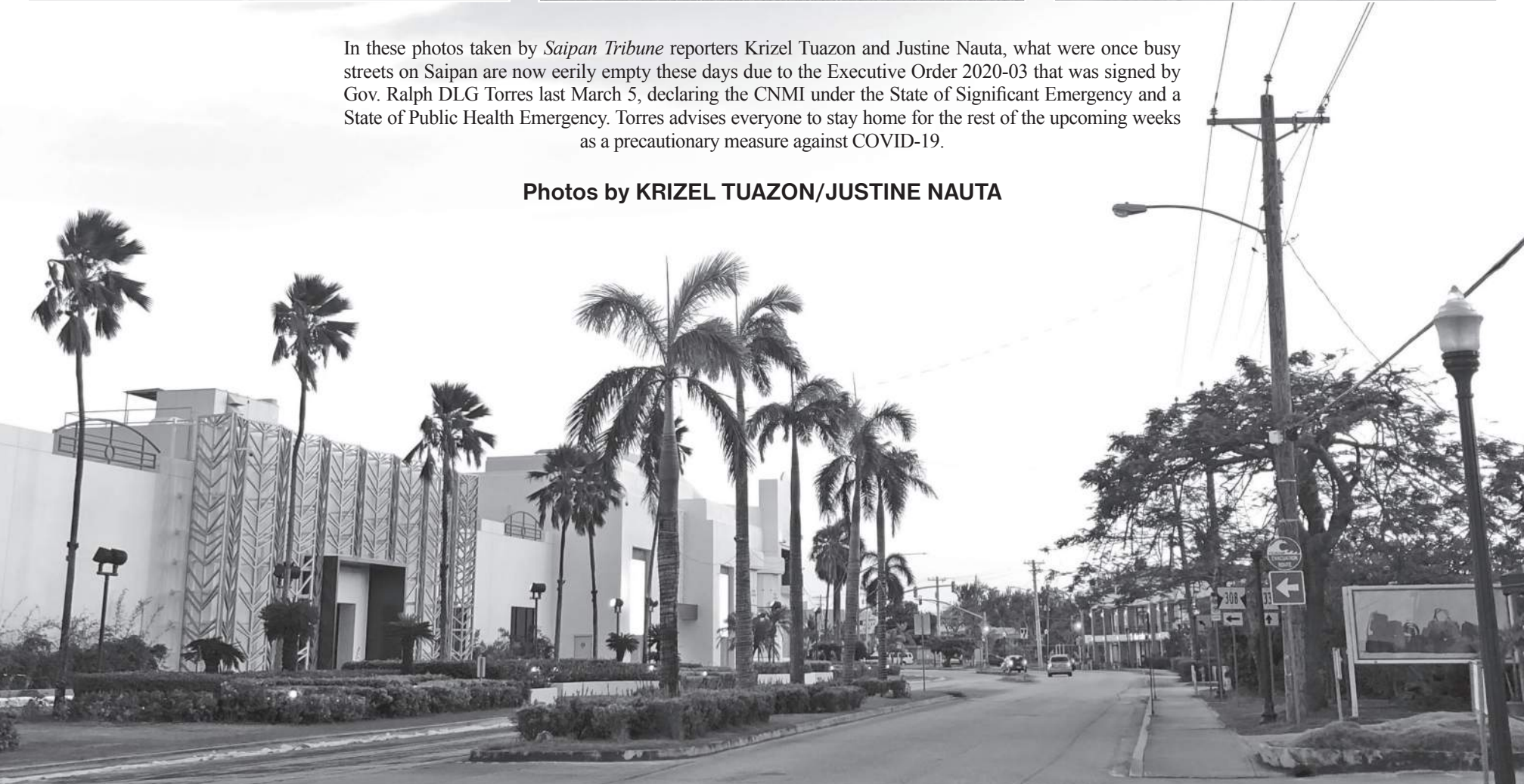
FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Empty Streets



In these photos taken by *Saipan Tribune* reporters Krizel Tuazon and Justine Nauta, what were once busy streets on Saipan are now eerily empty these days due to the Executive Order 2020-03 that was signed by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres last March 5, declaring the CNMI under the State of Significant Emergency and a State of Public Health Emergency. Torres advises everyone to stay home for the rest of the upcoming weeks as a precautionary measure against COVID-19.

Photos by KRIZEL TUAZON/JUSTINE NAUTA



Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Dr. Anthony Fauci is the coronavirus truth teller we need. Let him do his work

One of President Donald Trump's smartest moves in response to the COVID-19 pandemic was naming Dr. Anthony Fauci to the White House's coronavirus task force. The head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Fauci is a public health hero who has led the agency through six presidents and won't bend the facts or deny science to appease egos.

He didn't do it when he warned President Ronald Reagan that HIV was a serious public health threat that required fast federal action. And he's not doing it now as he stands with Trump at regular task-force briefings, sometimes contradicting or correcting the misleading information coming from his commander in chief.

In a meeting with pharmaceutical officials earlier this month, Trump repeatedly insisted he was hearing that a coronavirus vaccine would be ready in just a few months. Finally, Fauci stepped in. "Would you make sure you get the president the information that a vaccine that you make and start testing in a year is not a vaccine that's deployable," he said to the pharmaceutical executives. "And that is going to be, at the earliest, a year to a year and a half, no matter how fast you go."

More recently, Fauci has poured cold water on Trump's enthusiasm for the potential of an anti-malaria drug, chloroquine, to treat COVID-19 patients. As Fauci has pointed out, the evidence of the medicine's ability to safely and effectively treat COVID-19 patients is still just anecdotal.

Fauci also has been a leading advocate of the restrictions on movement and commerce that have cratered the economy, to Trump's growing frustration.

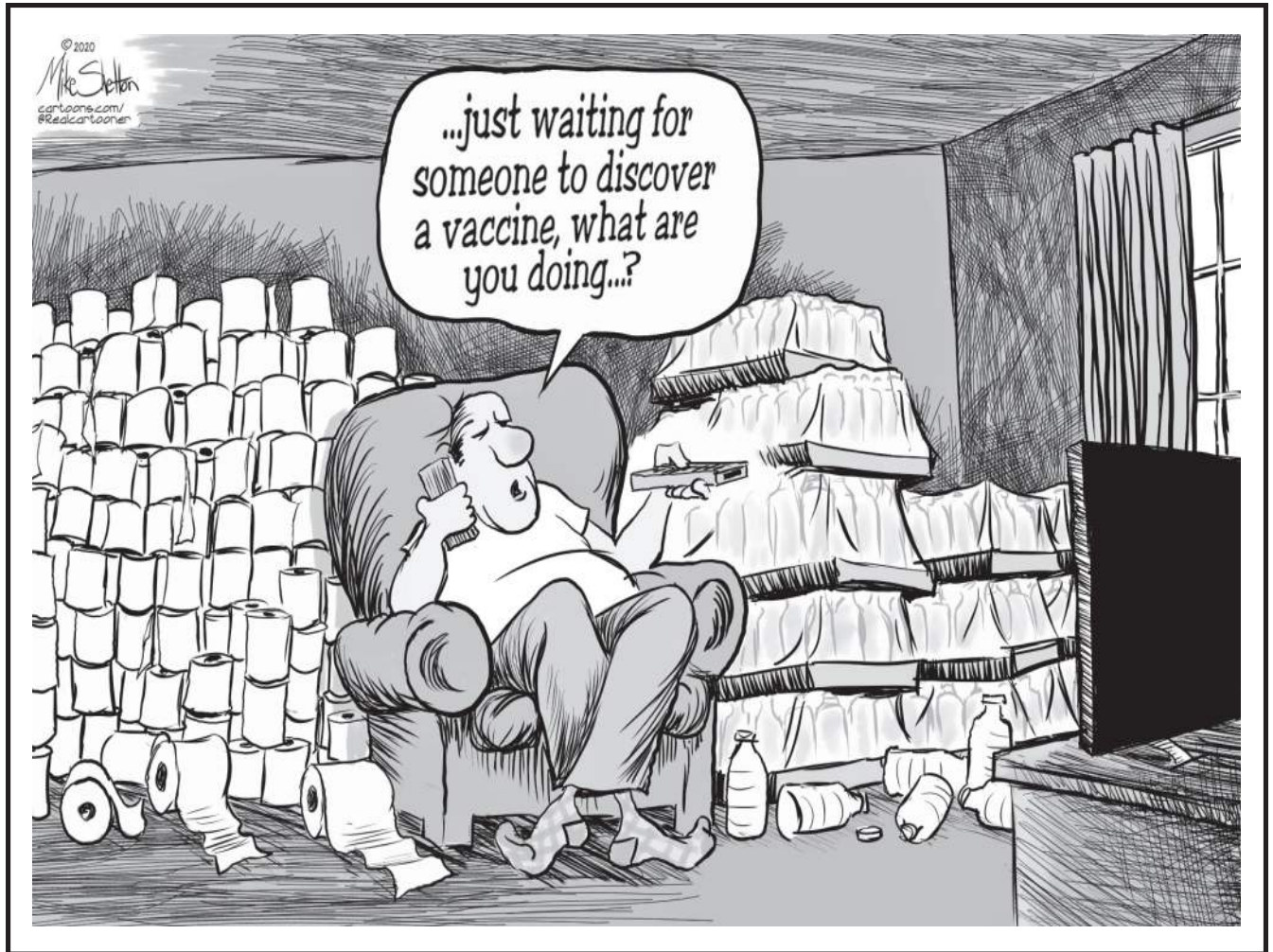
It really is quite remarkable, given the president's limited tolerance for aides who upstage or contradict him, that he has put up with what may seem to him like brazen insolence. The evident conflicts, along with rumors among White House aides, have led to speculation that Fauci may be on the way out, although both Trump and Fauci have downplayed any perceived tension between them.

We certainly hope that the president is not thinking of sidelining Fauci. In a massive public health crisis like this one, the best experts and the most credible scientists need to be on the dais with the president, telling us all bluntly what we need to know. So far, to his credit, Trump—whose disrespect for both science and facts in the past has been well documented—has stood by Fauci, even when the doctor has disagreed with him.

The simple reality is that when it comes to the science behind outbreaks of emerging infectious diseases, there are few experts equal to Fauci. The 79-year-old has been at the forefront of the federal responses to a series of viruses that have threatened the nation, including Ebola and two recent coronavirus outbreaks, SARS and MERS.

Surely the president knows he has more to lose than to gain if Fauci's fact-based, cautious and authoritative analyses were absent from the table as we continue to fight this pandemic.

(c)2020 Los Angeles Times



Please take social distancing seriously to save lives

By RONALD J. DANIELS, PAUL ROTHMAN, and KEVIN SOWERS
THE BALTIMORE SUN

Over the past few weeks, the coronavirus pandemic has transformed life for all of us. As a country, we have taken a series of steps that would have been unimaginable a few weeks ago. Millions of Americans are working from home. Colleges, schools, churches, gyms, libraries, stores and other public places have all suspended operations or gone virtual.

This massive transformation of everyday life has one goal: to decrease person to person interactions, and thus slow transmission of the coronavirus, which is now spreading widely among Americans from coast to coast. Coronavirus is extremely contagious, and social distance can thwart this proliferation: The virus can't infect those it can't reach.

Our goal at this point is to reduce the rate of infection, to "flatten the curve," as it has become known, so that hospitals aren't overwhelmed by severely ill patients or the impact on hospital and clinic staffing if our health care workforce becomes infected. Along with every other health care organization and health department in the country, Johns Hopkins is doing all it can to increase preparedness for a potential influx of COVID-19 patients. Nationwide, we've made important progress in this, increasing our supply of beds, staff and equipment. But hospitals and health departments can't do it alone. We need everyone to do their part to reduce infection rates.

Many millions of Americans have heeded this message, and are doing their best to self-isolate, minimize social contact and stay at least 6 feet away from others.

But unfortunately, we're still not doing enough. Too many of us are not taking social distancing seriously. As Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan pointed out Monday in announcing an order to close most businesses, people continue to socialize, to see friends and relatives in their homes and in the community—behavior he deemed "reckless and irresponsible." He is right. These activities may feel safe, but they significantly boost the risk of being infected, and of infecting others. This is a matter of life and death, for all of us.

Right now, social distancing is indispensable. Because we don't yet have a treatment or a vaccine for COVID-19, social distancing is one of the few effective tools we have right now to reduce the risk of widespread transmission. Social distancing

is especially crucial because with COVID-19, many infected people have no symptoms, so they don't even realize they are spreading it. In this way the virus spreads invisibly, widely and exponentially.

Compared to other viral diseases such as seasonal influenza, COVID-19 has a high fatality rate. Many experts say that without strict measures to limit the spread of the virus, between 100 to 150 million Americans could eventually be infected. For older people, the risk is significantly higher, especially for people with chronic illnesses. And there is growing evidence that younger adults can also become seriously ill.

Of course, we don't want everyone to practice social distancing. Doctors, nurses and other health care workers, as well as police officers, firefighters, grocery store workers and others, must continue to have close contact with the people they serve. The importance of their work supersedes the need for isolation. But for everyone else, strict social distancing is crucial.

We understand that social distancing is a major disruption, socially and economically. It's also hard to grasp what it's accomplishing, because unlike with a hurricane or a terrorist attack, there is little obvious evidence that anything is wrong.

We are only at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S., and what we do now will determine whether we suffer a worst-case scenario in which disease rates spike and a flood of severely ill patients overwhelms hospitals. Avoiding that will require systematic coordination between the public and private sectors, far beyond anything we have attempted. It will also require millions of individual Americans to change their behavior.

So what can you do? Here's a summary. Avoid groups and mass gatherings. Keep a 6-foot distance from other people, no hugs, no handshakes. Especially if you're over 60, stay home and avoid other people. Realize that if you break these rules, if your children or your parents break these rules, they are almost certainly exposing themselves, and whoever they are living with, to a wide swath of other people that they, and you, don't know.

Following social distancing rules will not be easy. It will not be fun. We can guarantee that. But we can also guarantee that it will help save lives—perhaps many, many lives.

Ronald J. Daniels (president@jhu.edu) is president of Johns Hopkins University. Paul Rothman is dean of the Johns Hopkins medical faculty and CEO of Johns Hopkins Medicine. Kevin Sowers is president of the Johns Hopkins Health System.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

New viruses, short memories and the need for constant, global vigilance

Every 25 to 30 years, the eminent virologist Robert Gallo has said, a gap occurs in the study of viruses, and the results are devastating. It's one of the reasons why Gallo, director of the Institute of Human Virology in Baltimore, established the Global Virus Network, a collaboration of disease experts in 32 countries who share information and watch for trouble.

It's also why Gallo is still on the job. He turned 83 on Monday, with no apparent plans for retirement. He worries. He worries that medical science is not attracting enough young, brilliant virologists. He worries most of all about gaps in human memory, about politicians and scientists forgetting what happens when there's a lapse in vigilance.

An election might produce a regressive government that is skeptical of science and cavalier about funding research. A whole community of virologists might turn away from certain diseases that other health professionals have learned to control.

When it comes to the big picture of humans and viruses, Gallo offers a lot of bandwidth.

Go back, he says, to the great influenza pandemic during and after World War I. It's known as the Spanish flu, though, as Gallo points out, "It started in a barracks in the Midwest."

Indeed, many historians trace the outbreak to March 1918 and an Army camp in Kansas. The deadly disease spread from there as soldiers were dispersed to other camps on their way to France. Some 670,000 Americans died, and the worldwide toll is estimated at 50 million, the deadliest pandemic in history.

Virology was a relatively new field 100 years ago. Still, Gallo says, even after the study of viruses expanded, there were lapses, about every 25 to 30 years.

There was the polio epidemic in the late 1940s and 1950s, and the period in the 1970s just before the pandemic of deadly acquired immune deficiency syndrome, caused by the retrovirus Gallo and two other scientists famously identified in the 1980s.

"It is eerie to read accounts of (the polio outbreak) showing that medical science in particular and society as a whole were focused on chronic degenerative diseases, believing serious in-

fectious diseases to be conquered," Gallo told an international conference in 2013. "Eerie also because that was precisely the attitude once again by the late 1970s, evidenced by the closure of some (university) microbiology departments, and threats of increasing reductions to (the Center for Disease Control and Prevention). ... Some even felt humans could not be infected by retroviruses."

It's a history Gallo has recounted many times in lectures to make his point: "Humans have a memory span of only 30 years."

And so here we are, six years after the Ebola outbreak, with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The world changes. The climate changes. Human habits change. People move. All of it can affect the natural chemistry of life and cause disease to emerge from just about anywhere on the planet. That's why "America First," the kind of nationalism espoused by the current president, doesn't work. It's why the Chinese government's initial reaction to the COVID-19 outbreak harmed efforts to slow its spread.

Global cooperation on virus detection and response is essential. That's why Gallo co-founded the Global Virus Network in 2011.

"We're going to have epidemics we can't know about," he told me this week. "The key is a quick response to them. The Chinese medical scientists were superb and quick in response to (the coronavirus outbreak in Wuhan). It was the government that was terrible at first."

Gallo's associate in the GVN, its president, Dr. Christian Brechot of France, believes global vigilance for outbreaks has improved, and he cites the international response to Ebola.

"Having said that," he told an interviewer last week, "I still do not think the world is adequately prepared, particularly around diagnostics. Diagnostics are really the heart of controlling an epidemic. If you are able in the first phase of an epidemic to identify individuals, check them, and isolate where necessary, you can control an epidemic."

But, of course, testing is where the United States has lagged way behind.

By **DAN RODRICKS**

The Baltimore Sun



Dan Rodricks is a long-time columnist for the Baltimore Sun.

Over the weekend, a Chinese company stepped up to offer Maryland a set of kits good for 1,000 coronavirus tests. They are now awaiting distribution from refrigeration at the IHV on West Baltimore Street. It was a board member of the GVN, a Chinese businessman, who made the connection for the delivery through Gallo.

"Over the last 10 years, I've become close to the Chinese, I've been watching their work," Gallo says. "They are exceptional in the biomedical sciences."

He says he expects to see more Chinese companies and the government distribute more tests and much-needed medical supplies to countries, including the U.S., facing the pandemic. "China knows it was the source," Gallo says. "They are extremely motivated to be the savior."

Whatever the motivation, the help should be welcomed here, Gallo says. You don't make the world safer by putting up walls.

He takes particular offense at the president's reference to COVID-19 as the "Chinese virus." Though it was once common to associate a disease with its suspected country of origin, such nomenclature has been discouraged for several years. It works against the international collaboration needed to save lives in an ever-changing, fast-changing world.

It's hard to see positives in the midst of pandemic, but Gallo thinks the GVN will get more attention now, and probably more funding, perhaps making less likely those 25-to-30-year gaps in vigilance he worries about.

Emergency policy responses should be realistic

By **VERONIQUE DE RUGY** and **DONALD J. BOUDREAUX**
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Crises understandably spark demands for action. And the bigger and more outside-the-box the action, the better such demands seem to be met. Yet crises also spark panic. Panic, in turn, promotes reckless impulsiveness. Thus times such as these suffer short supplies of sober and careful assessments. So let's all take a deep breath (or two!) and focus on some realities that must be kept in mind if today's policy responses are to do more good than harm.

Start by recognizing that today's threat to the economy springs from—and remains rooted in—people fearing physical contact with each other. This crisis, unlike economic downturns in the past, was not started by declines in people's job opportunities, wealth, income or spending. And so conventional economic fixes for recessions will not now work. Putting an extra \$1,000 or \$2,000 into the pocket of someone fearful of contracting a deadly virus isn't going to make that person eager to rush out and dine or attend an NBA game. This fact is especially true given that federal, state and local governments are all encouraging people to stay home.

Next, understand that stocks of real wealth—the likes of food, housing, medical care and toilet paper—are not conjured into existence merely by the Treasury Department sending government checks to households or by the Federal Reserve injecting new money into the banking system. Instead, what is needed to improve people's material well-being is the increased production of actual stuff.

But to improve people's material well-being requires also that any increased production be of goods and services that are of the most use to people. It would be wasteful to use resources in ramping up production of cruise ships and karaoke machines rather than of more desperately needed hospital beds and food. Income earned at work is valuable only if it can be spent on things that income earners most want.

Unfortunately, government efforts to stop so-called "price

gouging" reduce the production of goods and services that people want the most in times of emergency. By preventing prices from reflecting just how desperate consumers are for the likes of hand sanitizer, canned goods and fresh milk, anti-price-gouging measures thwart consumers' ability to obtain the real goods and services that would do them and their families the most good.

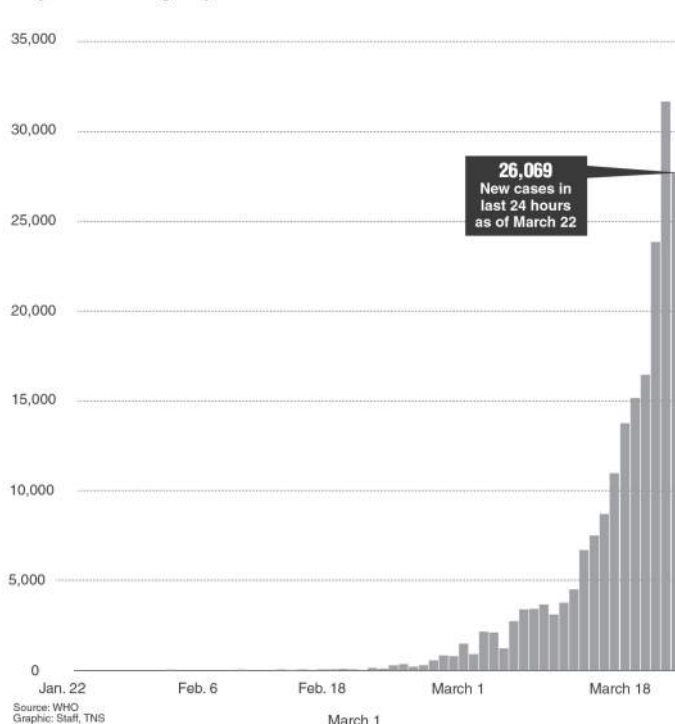
Finally, there's this reality, one that's especially easy to lose sight of during emergencies: Today's response to the current crisis will affect how people prepare for, and respond to, future crises.

Collectively, people can afford to stop working only if adequate resources were previously saved to sustain those who are currently holed up at home. Without such a stock of saved goods to consume, people not working would eventually die not of disease but of starvation, thirst, and exposure.

Ideally, each and every household would save enough to sustain its members during times of quarantine, illness, and other reasons for taking lengthy absences from work. Fortunately, an economy that falls short of the ideal can still operate smoothly: People who need to consume while not working, but who don't have adequate savings, can get what they need from the savings and continued work of others. But savings and continued pro-

Coronavirus cases

Daily confirmed cases globally



duction must nevertheless be done by some people.

The danger is that the government policies that address today's crisis by transferring command over resources from those who saved to those who didn't risks causing people to save too little going forward. Why save for a rainy day if you expect to receive from government enough to see you through the next crisis—or for government to transfer to others much of what you do save?






If today's response by government is ill-thought out, Americans might be less prepared to deal with whatever crisis will strike next.

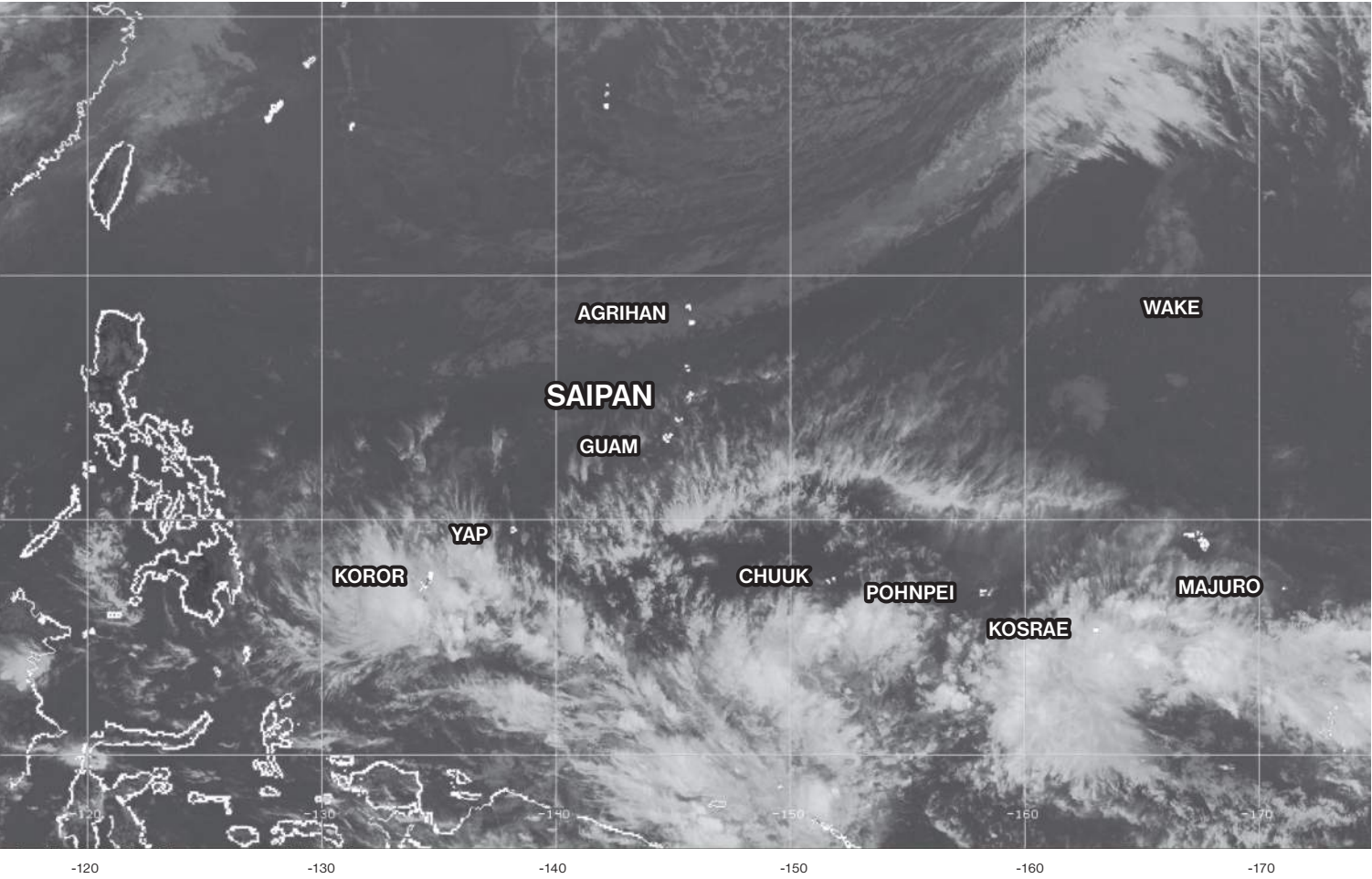
To point to this awkward reality is not to oppose all, or even most, government emergency assistance. It is, instead, to counsel that whatever steps governments take today

should be taken not in panic mode but, instead, with the sober recognition that these actions will affect how people behave after the current crisis passes. And how people behave then will unavoidably affect our readiness and response to future crises.

Veronique de Rugy is a senior research fellow with the Mercatus Center at George Mason University. Donald J. Boudreaux is professor of economics at GMU George Mason University and a senior fellow with the F.A. Hayek Program at GMU's Mercatus Center.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY	
									
Partly cloudy. A slight chance of light showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.		Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.		Partly cloudy with isolated light showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph		Breezy during the day. Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.	
88°	75°	88°	76°	88°	76°	88°	76°	88°	76°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 6:46 AM, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2020
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite shows a shear line near Pagan. This is helping to keep the Marianas south of Pagan a bit drier. Combined seas of 3 to 5 feet have pretty much bottomed out and will now start rising again. The buoys reveal that mos of the wave energy is coming nearly straight from the east. The Tanapag buoy looks a bit north of east and the Ipan buoy looks a bit south of east, because of the way the land mass is refracting the swells.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA ▲ ▼ °F		
Guam and Rota	Windy	86° / 76°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	87° / 80°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 81°
Pohnpei	Windy	86° / 80°
Kosrae	Windy	86° / 80°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:16 AM	6:28 PM
Friday	6:16 AM	6:28 PM
Saturday	6:15 AM	6:28 PM
Sunday	6:14 AM	6:29 PM
Monday	6:13 AM	6:29 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	7:26 AM	7:57 PM	-
Friday	8:01 AM	8:45 PM	-
Saturday	8:39 AM	9:33 PM	-
Sunday	9:19 AM	10:24 PM	-
Monday	10:03 AM	11:17 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE ▲ ▼ °F		
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	66° / 54°
Beijing	Sunny	57° / 28°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	79° / 72°
Honolulu	Windy	78° / 68°
London	Partly Cloudy	54° / 36°
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	61° / 44°
Manila	Mostly Sunny	93° / 79°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	79° / 59°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	82° / 72°
New York	Partly Cloudy	55° / 46°
Osaka	Showers	70° / 54°
Paris	Mostly Sunny	50° / 36°
Busan	Rain	63° / 45°
Rome	Showers	54° / 46°
Salem	Sunny	82° / 60°
San Francisco	Sunny	55° / 45°
Seoul	Showers	57° / 36°
Tokyo	Windy	70° / 63°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	63° / 50°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET		
2:57 AM	LOW TIDE	0.44
8:48 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.73
3:17 PM	LOW TIDE	0.40
9:14 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.72

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- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 26, 2020

DEPARTURES			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	1, 4, 6, 7
ARRIVALS			
GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA174	7:30am	8:11am	1, 4, 6, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

Asian shares jump after Dow sees biggest gain since 1933

NEW YORK (AP)—Shares opened sharply higher in Asia on Wednesday after the Dow Jones Industrial Average surged to its best day since 1933 with Congress and the White House nearing a deal on injecting nearly \$2 trillion of aid into an economy ravaged by the coronavirus.

Japan's Nikkei 225 index jumped 5.3%, while Hong Kong added 3% and Sydney climbed 3.6%. Markets across Asia were all up more than 2%.

The Dow burst 11.4% higher, while the more closely followed S&P 500 index leaped 9.4% as a wave of buying around the world interrupted what has been a brutal month of nearly nonstop selling. Investors released some frustration that had pent up over days of watching the U.S. Senate stalemate over the crucial rescue package.

Despite the gains, investors were far from saying markets have hit bottom. Rallies nearly as big as this have punctuated the last few weeks, and none lasted more than a day. Economists and investors alike are still expecting to see some dire economic numbers in the days and weeks ahead.

"Today was a good day, but we would not necessarily see this as turnaround time," said



A currency trader walks by screens showing the Korea Composite Stock Price Index (KOSPI), left, and the foreign exchange rate between U.S. dollar and South Korean won at the foreign exchange dealing room in Seoul, South Korea, Tuesday, March 24, 2020.

Adam Taback, chief investment officer for Wells Fargo Private Bank.

Both Democrats and Republicans said Tuesday they're close to agreeing on a massive economic rescue package, which will include

payments to U.S. households and aid for small businesses and the travel industry, among other things. A vote in the Senate could come later Tuesday or Wednesday.

Investors were imploring Congress to act, particularly as the Federal Reserve has done nearly all it can to sustain markets, including its lat-

est round of extraordinary aid launched Monday.

"It's sort of like, keep the patient alive in the emergency room so you can provide some treatment options," said Katie Nixon, chief investment officer at Northern Trust Wealth Management.

The Dow rose 2,112.98 points, its biggest point gain

in history, to 20,704.91. The S&P 500, which is much more important to most 401(k) accounts, rose 209.93, or 9.4%, to 2,447.33 for its third-biggest percentage gain since World War II. The Nasdaq composite jumped 557.18 points, or 8.1%, to 7,417.86.

In Asia early Wednesday, Tokyo's Nikkei was at

19,053.40, while the Hang Seng rose to 23,374.57. South Korea's Kospi gained 4.2% to 1,678.13 and the S&P/ASX 200 picked up 3.6% to 4,906.10. Taiwan's benchmark jumped 4.4%.

U.S. crude oil gained 88 cents to \$24.89 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude, the international pricing standard, added 91 cents to \$30.65 per barrel.

In currency trading, the U.S. dollar was at 110.90 Japanese yen, down from 111.22 yen late Tuesday. The euro rose to \$1.0803 from \$1.0790.

Earlier share rebounds have evaporated. Since stocks began selling off on Feb. 20, the S&P 500 has had six days where it's risen, and all but one of them were big gains of more than 4%. Afterward, stocks fell an average of 5% the next day.

"One of the things to be careful about is thinking this will be the panacea or that this fiscal response will be sufficient," said Eric Freedman, chief investment officer at U.S. Bank Wealth Management.

Ultimately, investors say they need to see the number of new infections peak before markets can find a floor. The increasing spread is forcing companies to park airplanes, shut hotels and close restaurants to dine-in customers.

Many airline flights nearly empty

Airline service in the United States is teetering on the brink of collapse, with near-empty planes and coronavirus outbreaks that have left some air traffic control towers empty.

Even with sharply reduced schedules, airlines are consolidating some of the remaining flights because passengers aren't showing up.

An official of one major U.S. airline, who asked that they and their airline not be identified, ticked off more than a dozen flights that departed on Tuesday morning with fewer than 10 passengers on board. In a few cases, pilots and flight attendants outnumbered passengers.

The official said the average flight was just over 20% full and that figure is expected to drop into the teens by

the weekend.

The Transportation Security Administration said it screened 331,000 people at airport checkpoints on Monday, an 86% decline from the corresponding Monday a year ago, more than 2.4 million people poured through checkpoints.

Major airlines are drafting plans in case they must shut down domestic flights because of a lack of air traffic controllers or airport screeners.

"We have plans in place in case that happens," the airline official said. "It's a dire situation."

An official at another major carrier called it "prudent contingency planning" given that health experts advise against gathering of more than 10 people. (AP)

Trump hoping to see US economy reopened by Easter amid virus

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump said Tuesday he is hoping the United States will be reopened by Easter as he weighs how to relax nationwide social-distancing guidelines to put some workers back on the job during the coronavirus outbreak.

Trump's optimism contradicted the warnings of some public health officials who called for stricter—not looser—restrictions on public interactions. But federal officials suggested that advisories could be loosened in areas not experiencing widespread infection.

With lives and the economy hanging in the balance, Trump said he was already looking toward easing the advisories

that have sidelined workers, shuttered schools and led to a widespread economic slowdown.

"I would love to have the country opened up and just raring to go by Easter," he said during a Fox News virtual town hall. Easter is just over two weeks away—Apr. 12.

"Wouldn't it be great to have all of the churches full?" Trump said in a subsequent interview. "You'll have packed churches all over our country."

And as scientists warned the worst is yet to come—with hospital systems tested beyond their capacity and health workers sidelined by exposure—Trump addressed the nation, saying he was beginning "to see the light at the end

of the tunnel."

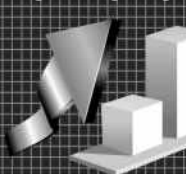
Trump's comments came even as White House officials urged people who have left New York City amid the outbreak to self-quarantine for 14 days after their departure, owing to the widespread rate of infection in the metro area. It also follows on the president encouraging lawmakers on Capitol Hill to pass a roughly \$2 trillion stimulus package—estimated at roughly \$6 trillion once the Federal Reserve's actions are included—to ease the financial pain for Americans and hard-hit industries.

Health experts have made clear that unless Americans continue to dramatically limit social interaction—staying home from work and isolating

themselves—the number of infections will overwhelm the health care system, as it has in parts of Italy, leading to many more deaths. While the worst outbreaks are concentrated in certain parts of the country, such as New York, experts warn that the highly infectious disease is certain to spread.

The U.S. is now more than a week into an unprecedented 15-day effort to encourage all Americans to drastically scale back their public activities. The guidelines, issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, are voluntary, but many state and local leaders have issued mandatory restrictions in line with, or even tighter than, those issued by the CDC.

STOCK PORTFOLIO



LEADING INDICATORS

S&P

2,447.33

+209.93

+9.38%

DOW

20,704.91

+2,113.01

+11.37%

NASDAQ

7,417.86

+557.19

+8.12%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.66
British Pound	0.84
Canadian Dollar	1.43
Chinese Yuan	6.95
Euro	0.92

Hong Kong Dollar	7.76
Indian Rupee	75.54
Japanese Yen	111.19
Malaysian Ringgit	4.34
New Zealand Dollar	1.70
Philippine Peso	50.16

Russian Ruble	78.17
Singapore Dollar	1.45
South Korean Won	1,202.05
Swiss Franc	0.98
Taiwan Dollar	29.53
Thailand Baht	32.85

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Nation

‘Imaginary clock’: Governors reject Trump’s virus timeline

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—Governors across the nation on Tuesday rejected President Donald Trump’s new accelerated timeline for reopening the U.S. economy, as they continued to impose more restrictions on travel and public life in an attempt to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

The dismissal of Trump’s mid-April timeframe for a national reopening came from Republicans and Democrats, from leaders struggling to manage hot spots of the outbreak and those still bracing for the worst. Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan, the head of the National Governors Association and a Republican, called the messaging confusing since most leaders are still focused on enforcing the restrictions, not easing them. He accused the White House of running on a schedule made of some “imaginary clock.”

The pushback suggests Trump’s talk of an early reboot is unlikely to gain traction. In most cases, it’s state leaders—not the federal government—who are responsible for both imposing and lifting the stay-at-home orders and other restrictions intended to stop the contagion.

But the governors’ reaction also revealed the striking disconnect and growing tensions between Trump and the state leaders closer to the front lines of a crisis that threatens to overwhelm U.S. hospitals and claim thousands of lives.

The president is eager to get the U.S. back to work as the crisis takes a political toll and the economy, which had been the cornerstone of his re-election

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo speaks during a news conference against a backdrop of medical supplies at the Jacob Javits Center that will house a temporary hospital in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, Tuesday, March 24, 2020, in New York.

AP



bid, begins to wobble. The economic damage could be worse than the death toll from the virus, he has said. As soon as next week, Trump wants to take another look at recommendations about business closures and self-isolation, and said Tuesday the country could reopen by Easter Sunday—less than a month away. “Our people want to return to work,” he said.

But governors suggested that view had little connection to the reality they’re facing. California Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom said he and Trump are “clearly operating under a different set of assumptions.” California, home to 40 million people and the world’s fifth-largest economy,

reported hundreds of new known cases of COVID 19 and now has more than 2,200, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

In New York, Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo on Tuesday said the infection rate was doubling every three days and pleaded for more federal help as the number of cases in the state surpassed 20,000.

“If you ask the American people to choose between public health and the economy, then it’s no contest. No American is going to say accelerate the economy at the cost of human life,” Cuomo told reporters Tuesday. “Job one has to be save lives. That has to be the priority.”

Even some of Trump’s usual allies are continuing to move ahead with tighter controls on travel, commerce and mobility, despite the president’s words. In Texas, Republican Gov. Greg Abbott has endorsed stay-at-home orders that continued to spread through the biggest cities. Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey said public health needed to come first, and South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem is stressing limiting business activity, not relaxing them.

“This situation is not going to be over in a week,” said Noem, whose state has more than two dozen cases. “We have another eight weeks until we see our peak infection rate.”

The U.S. is now more than a week into an unprecedented effort to encourage all Americans to drastically scale back their public activities. The orders closing schools, restaurants and businesses have largely come from a patchwork of local and state governments—with areas hit hardest imposing the most restrictions, while other communities are still weighing tighter rules.

That means the White House is eyeing ways to ease the advisories while some areas are still ramping up their responses—a mixed message that some governors worried would lead Americans to ignore the orders of local officials.

Michigan’s Gretchen Whit-

mer, a Democrat, told WWMT-TV/Sinclair Broadcast Group that Trump’s “off-the-cuff statements are really going to undermine our ability to protect people.” Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker said Trump was “not taking into account the true damage that this will do to our country if we see truly millions of people die.”

Trump has defended his handling of the outbreak and argued that his administration is doing all it can to help governors.

“They shouldn’t be hitting us,” he said on Fox News. “The fact is we’ve done a lot.”

Among the few statehouse leaders to publicly endorse Trump’s view was Texas’ lieutenant governor, Dan Patrick, 69, who on Monday suggested that people his age and older can “take care of ourselves” as the nation gets back to work. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says people over 65 are at higher risk for the disease.

Friction between Trump and the governors has been steady throughout the crisis. The president said last week that states should be doing more to obtain their own critically needed supplies while insisting that the federal government was not a shipping clerk. States, meanwhile, have been pressing the government to help procure necessary protective and breathing equipment.

On Tuesday, Trump suggested any shortage of ventilators was on the states.

“All they had to do was order them two years ago, but they decided not to do it. They can’t blame us for that,” he said on Fox News.

Too big to infect? Some US leaders defy virus guidelines

WASHINGTON (AP)—The State Department has advised against all international travel because of the coronavirus, but that didn’t stop Secretary of State Mike Pompeo from flying to Afghanistan this week.

Gyms across the nation’s capital are shuttered, but Sen. Rand Paul, an eye doctor, still managed a workout at the Senate on Sunday morning as he awaited the results of a coronavirus test. It came back positive.

The guidance against shaking hands? That hasn’t always applied to President Donald Trump, whose penchant for pressing the flesh continued even after public health officials in his administration were warning that such bodily contact could facilitate the spread of the contagious virus. Practice social distancing? Daily White House briefings involve Trump and

other senior officials crowded around a podium.

Even as the country has largely hunkered down, heeding the guidance of health experts and the directives of state leaders, some powerful people in Washington have defied preventative measures aimed at curbing the spread. Their business-as-usual actions are at odds with the restrictions everyday Americans find themselves under—and with the government’s own messaging.

Some human behavior experts say the “do as I say, not as I do” ethos seemingly on display is common among powerful officials, who may be inclined to think rules for the general public don’t apply to them in the same way or who can easily disassociate their own actions from what they say is best for others.

“When we have high

power, we think of ourselves as exceptional as if the rules don’t apply to us,” said Maurice Schweitzer, a professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania who has researched behavior and decision-making. “We’re much more prone to do what we want because we don’t feel constrained in the way that less powerful people do.”

In Pompeo’s case, the State Department says the unannounced trip—coming amid a near-global travel shutdown—was necessary and urgent because of political turmoil in Afghanistan that U.S. officials fear could threaten a recent U.S.-Taliban peace deal that calls for American troop withdrawals. Pompeo left Kabul on Monday without being able to secure a power-sharing deal.

People traveling with Pompeo had their temperatures tak-

en and were given small plastic bags containing a face mask, hand sanitizer, bleach wipes and mini-disposable thermometers. A State Department medical official told reporters that Pompeo and his staff would not be quarantining themselves because Afghanistan is not considered a high-risk country for the virus and because Pompeo’s movements on the trip were controlled.

But some of the behavior by other officials has drawn rebukes.

Asked in a Science Magazine interview about Trump shaking hands, Anthony Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said he tells White House staff that “we should not be doing that. Not only that—we should be physically separating a bit more on those press conferences.”

With isolation, abuse activists fear an ‘explosive cocktail’

“Safer at Home.” It’s a slogan of choice for the mandatory confinement measures aimed at curbing the spread of the coronavirus. But it’s not true for everyone.

As the world’s families hunker down, there’s another danger, less obvious but just as insidious, that worries advocates and officials: a potential spike in domestic violence as victims spend day and night trapped at home with their abusers, with tensions rising, nowhere to escape, limited or no access to friends or relatives—and no idea when it will end.

“An abuser will use anything in their toolbox to exert their power and control, and COVID-19 is one of those tools,” said Crystal Justice,

who oversees development at the National Domestic Violence Hotline, a 24/7 national hotline in the United States.

In cities and towns everywhere, concern is high, and meaningful numbers are hard to come by. In some cases, officials worry about a spike in calls, and in others, about a drop in calls, which might indicate that victims cannot find a safe way to reach out for help.

On a normal day, 1,800 to 2,000 people will call that national hotline. That number hasn’t changed, but that doesn’t surprise organizers. After natural disasters like earthquakes, Justice says, it’s only when schools and workplaces reopen that people are finally able to reach out. (AP)

Asia

India's 1.3B locked down as virus surges elsewhere

NEW DELHI (AP)—The world's largest democracy went under the world's biggest lockdown Wednesday, with India's 1.3 billion people ordered to stay home in a bid to stop the coronavirus pandemic from spreading and overwhelming its fragile health care system as it has done elsewhere.

The unprecedented move came as infections surged in Europe, New York scrambled to set up thousands of new hospital beds, and organizers delayed this summer's Tokyo Olympics until next year. Financial markets continued their wild swings, with Wall Street posting its best day since 1933 as U.S. Congress and the White House neared a nearly \$2 trillion aid deal.

In India, everything but essential services like supermarkets were shuttered. Normally bustling railway stations in New Delhi were deserted and streets that just hours before were jumbled with honking cars were eerily silent with just a trickle of pedestrians.

"Delhi looks like a ghost town," said Nishank Gupta, a lawyer. "I have never seen the city so quiet before."

India has about 450 cases of the virus, but Prime Minister Narendra Modi warned that if he didn't take action now it could set the country



A vegetable vendor pushes his bicycle loaded with vegetables on an empty street during a complete lockdown amid growing concerns of coronavirus in Noida, outskirts of New Delhi, India, Tuesday, March 24, 2020.

back decades.

More than 422,000 people worldwide have been infected and nearly 19,000 have died, according to a running count kept by Johns Hopkins University.

A flicker of hope that Italy, which has seen the most deaths in the world, might be

turning the corner faded Tuesday after officials reported an increase in both new cases and fatalities. Spain had so many bodies it commandeered an ice rink to store them.

There are signs, however, that drastic measures to keep people away from one another can push back the spread of

the illness. In China, the province where the outbreak was first spotted late last year started lifting its lockdown.

Some train stations and bus services reopened in Hubei on Wednesday and people who passed health check would finally be allowed to travel for the first time since January. A similar easing in the hard-hit epicenter of Wuhan is planned for April 8, though buses and subways could start sooner.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear

up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia and death.

It is the latter cases — often requiring ventilators and specialized care — that threaten to overwhelm hospitals, which in several countries are already running short of critical equipment needed to treat patients and keep doctors and nurses safe.

In New York, the number of cases is doubling every three days, threatening

to swamp the city's intensive care units in the weeks ahead, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said. The state has recorded more than 200 deaths, or one-third of the U.S. total.

"One of the forecasters said to me: 'We were looking at a freight train coming across the country,'" the governor said. "We're now looking at a bullet train."

Cuomo proposed the country send thousands of ventilators to New York City — the metropolitan area needs 30,000 of them, he said — and demanded that President Donald Trump use wartime authority to force manufacturers to produce them.

Trump has invoked the Korean War-era Defense Production Act to deter hoarding but has been reluctant to use it to force companies to produce medical supplies. Vice President Mike Pence said on Fox News that 2,000 ventilators have been shipped to New York and 2,000 more will be sent Wednesday.

In Washington, top congressional and White House officials said they expected to reach a deal soon on a package to shore up businesses and send relief checks to ordinary Americans of \$1,200 per person or \$3,000 for a family of four.

Stocks rallied around the world on the news. On Wall Street, the Dow Jones Industrial Average surged more than 2,100 points, or 11.4%.

With Americans' lives and livelihoods hanging in the balance, Trump said he hoped to reopen the country in less than three weeks.

Pakistan halts domestic passenger flights over new virus

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Pakistan on Wednesday halted all domestic passenger flights to stop the spread of the new coronavirus after reporting nearly 1,000 cases the country, just as Libya became the latest at-risk Mideast nation to report its first infection.

The announcement by Libya's U.N.-backed government leaves just war-torn Yemen as the last country in the Mideast to not have a reported case of the new virus and the COVID-19 illness it causes. Already, health officials have warned of the danger of the virus spread in the Arab world's poorest country, whose health care system has collapsed amid its yearslong war.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia and death.

In Pakistan, the domestic flight ban will begin on

Thursday, civil aviation spokesman Abdul Sattar Khokhar said. Islamabad previously cut train service and international flights.

Initially, most of those infected were Pakistani pilgrims returning from neighboring hard-hit Iran, which has seen the Mideast's worst outbreak of the virus. Now, however, the virus is being reported in people who had no travel history, officials say.

Authorities in Iran reported another 122 deaths on Tuesday, bringing the total number of the country's fatalities to more than 1,900 amid more than 24,800 confirmed cases. There are some 33,000 confirmed cases overall in the region.

In Libya, officials say a 73-year-old man who crossed into Libya from neighboring Tunisia on March 5 became the large North African country's first recorded case. The Libyan patient had recently traveled to Saudi Arabia, according to the National Center for Disease Control, and was receiving medical treatment

for his fever and cough in isolation at a Tripoli hospital.

The confirmation of Libya's first case, three weeks after the patient's arrival in the country, poses a test for its fragile medical system.

Attempts at a nationwide disease protection program have been undermined by the country's division between two rival governments, in the east and west of the country, and a patchwork of armed groups supporting either administration. Even on Tuesday, Tripoli's suburbs came under heavy fire as the United Nations appealed for a freeze in fighting so authorities could focus on preventing the spread of the coronavirus.

Meanwhile in Egypt, Prime Minister Moustafa Madbouly told reporters that the 11-hour nationwide curfew from 7 p.m. until 6 a.m. would go into effect Wednesday, during which public transportation would also come to a halt. Egypt has confirmed 402 cases and 22 fatalities, including two senior military officers.

Philippine Congress approves national emergency declaration

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine Congress on Tuesday approved a bill declaring a national emergency and authorizing the president to launch a massive aid program for 18 million families and tap private hospitals and ships in fighting the coronavirus outbreak.

President Rodrigo Duterte can reappropriate the executive department's budget under the legislation, which will also punish people disobeying quarantine orders and spreading "false information" about the outbreak, legislators said. The state of national emergency will last for three months but can be extended by Congress.

The Senate and the House of Representatives, which are dominated by Duterte's allies, both held emergency sessions

Monday and worked beyond midnight to deliberate the bill, with most lawmakers participating online as a health precaution. Duterte is expected to sign the bill into law soon.

Duterte has already locked down the main northern island of Luzon, home to more than 50 million people, by restricting travel to and from the region, which includes Manila, the capital. Most residents have been ordered to stay home and work and classes have been suspended under the monthlong containment.

Opposition Sen. Francis Pangilinan said the bill carries safeguards against potential abuse and blocked a proposal that the president be able to take over private companies if the crisis worsens.

The bill reflects the widespread call "for mass testing,

support to front-liners and cash transfers to the vulnerable," Pangilinan said.

Amnesty International said the government should ensure that all responses to the outbreak comply with international human rights law and address the vulnerability of the poor.

"The COVID-19 outbreak exacerbates social inequalities," the group's Philippine director, Butch Olano, said. "Actions from the government should aim to reduce or eliminate these inequalities, including to ensure access to necessary health care and preventative goods and services especially for people living in poverty."

Philippine officials reported Tuesday a total of 552 cases of the virus in the country, with 35 deaths. Twenty patients have recovered.

World

Survivors of world conflicts offer perspective amid pandemic



In this Dec. 11, 1987 file photo, a man holds his son's hand as they make their way along a debris littered street in the Balata refugee camp near Nablus in the occupied West Bank after a curfew was imposed on the camp.

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)—As Western countries reeling from the coronavirus pandemic awaken to a new reality of economic collapse, overwhelmed hospitals, grounded flights and home confinement, it's tempting to think the end of days is at hand.

But for millions across the Middle East and in conflict zones farther afield, much of this is grimly familiar. The survivors of recent wars, too often dismissed as the pitiable victims of failed states, can offer hard-earned wisdom in times like these.

Few have more experience with lockdowns and closures than the Palestinians. During the uprising known as the Second Intifada in the early 2000s, Israel shut down parts of the occupied West Bank and Gaza for weeks on end, using checkpoints and curfews to try to quash it.

In 2002, Israel imposed an around-the-clock curfew in Bethlehem for weeks as troops battled Palestinian militants holed up in the Church of the Nativity, built on the site revered by Christians as Jesus' birthplace.

Jamal Shihadeh remembers being stuck in his home for 25 days before he slipped out and fled to a nearby Jewish settlement in order to work. He ended up sleeping in the factory until the closures were lifted. Now he is stuck at home again. Israel and the Palestinian Authority sealed off Bethlehem and severely restricted

movement after several residents and tourists tested positive for the coronavirus.

The virus causes only mild symptoms in most patients, who recover in a matter of weeks. But it is highly contagious and can cause severe illness, including pneumonia, particularly in older patients or those with underlying health problems.

"A virus outbreak is much more serious than an Israeli invasion," Shihadeh said. "You can stay away from the soldiers, but I'm not sure you can stay away from a virus."

Now he and his wife and sons, who have been stuck at home since March 5, live much the same way he did in 2002. They watch the news and Arab soap operas on TV, they play cards and socialize, and they wait for the situation to improve.

'OTHER THINGS WERE NOT IMPORTANT'

The Gaza Strip has been under an Israeli and Egyptian blockade since the Islamic militant group Hamas seized power in 2007. Travel in or out is heavily restricted, and many Palestinians were trapped in their homes for days or weeks at a time during the three wars Hamas has fought with Israel.

During the 2008-2009 war, Mohammed al-Attar awoke one morning to the sound of tanks, aircraft and gunfire. By then, much of his extended family had gathered on the ground floor, with about 80 people sleeping in the liv-

ing room, kitchen and other areas away from outer walls or windows.

The family had stocked up on mattresses and basic goods, but after five days they raised white flags and were evacuated to a school that had been turned into a shelter.

"We were just praying for it to stop and that we would stay alive," he said. "Other things were not important."

Gaza has only reported two coronavirus cases, but there are fears that even a small outbreak could overwhelm its health care system. There are only about 60 ventilators in the territory of 2 million, and most of the breathing machines are already in use by patients with other ailments.

Long before the pandemic, Gazans were forced to adapt to daily hardships. Most only have a few hours of electricity a day, the tap water is undrinkable, and the unemployment rate is about 50%. It's almost always been difficult to leave, even for those who can afford it, and now the borders with Israel and Egypt are sealed.

'WE EXPECT IT TO HAPPEN TO US'

In Sarajevo, the lockdowns have revived painful memories of when the city was besieged for 46 months during the Balkan wars in the 1990s.

Bosnian Serb fighters were deployed on the surrounding hillsides and pounded the city with artillery fire. There were

severe shortages of food, water and electricity, and snipers gunned down those who ventured out.

It was the kind of thing you hear about on the news, the kind of thing that happens in faraway countries. That's what the people of Sarajevo thought.

And then it happened to them.

Aida Begic, a filmmaker who was a teenager at the time, recalls how even after fighting began in other parts of the country, no one in Sarajevo thought it would reach them.

"Then it happened, and it lasted for three and a half years," she said. "When something like this (pandemic) is happening, we do not doubt that it will happen to us. We expect it to happen to us. We are certain that it will."

Now, many are drawing on lessons from the war. Some are buying wood-burning stoves, seed potatoes and onions. Begic knows people who have bought up to 40 kilograms (90 pounds) of flour.

"Someone who hasn't had our experience may not remember that they must buy extra face cream and other similar everyday products," she said. "We remember the things we missed during the war."

'AN ENEMY THAT WE DON'T KNOW'

The comparisons with wartime lockdowns only go so far, as those who have lived

through both readily acknowledge.

Hanaa al-Yemen, a 55-year-old mother of three in Lebanon's port city of Sidon, lived through her country's 1975-1990 civil war and various other bouts of violence, including the 2006 war between Israel and the Hezbollah militant group.

But she said the coronavirus pandemic, and the country-wide lockdown imposed to contain it, is like nothing she's ever experienced.

"We used to be so scared of the warplanes and the random shelling, but we could still go out at times and work," she said. "Today there is an enemy and a danger that we don't know, we can't see or touch it, and it can strike us or a member of our family at any time."

In Cuba, which is under a 30-day lockdown, many have

become masters of self-sufficiency through decades of U.S. sanctions and several periods of severe stagnation in the centrally planned economy.

"We're always storing things," said Taimy Martinez, a 41-year-old administrator in a state-run business. "If we have chicken, we use it little by little. If we have money to buy canned food, we do. Sugar, a bit of bread to make toast, we make it last."

"I can endure a three-week quarantine if we start today," she said.

In the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir, lockdowns have been a fact of life for decades. Pakistan and India have split the region in two, each claiming it in its entirety, while residents have long demanded independence or union with Pakistan.

WORLD BRIEFS

Brazil's Bolsonaro again says coronavirus concern overblown

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)—President Jair Bolsonaro on Tuesday stuck with his contention that concern about the new coronavirus is overblown, and accused Brazilian media of trying to stoke nationwide hysteria. Bolsonaro said in a nationally televised address that the media had seized on the death toll in Italy, which he said is suffering so severely because of its elderly population and colder climate. "The virus arrived, we are confronting it, and it will pass shortly. Our lives have to continue, jobs should be maintained," the president said. Bolsonaro added that certain Brazilian states should abandon their "scorched earth" policy of prohibiting public transport, closing business and schools, and calling for mass confinement at home for their residents. He did say people should be "extremely worried" about transmitting the virus to others, particularly to parents and grandparents.

8 European spacecraft put in hibernation amid virus lockdown

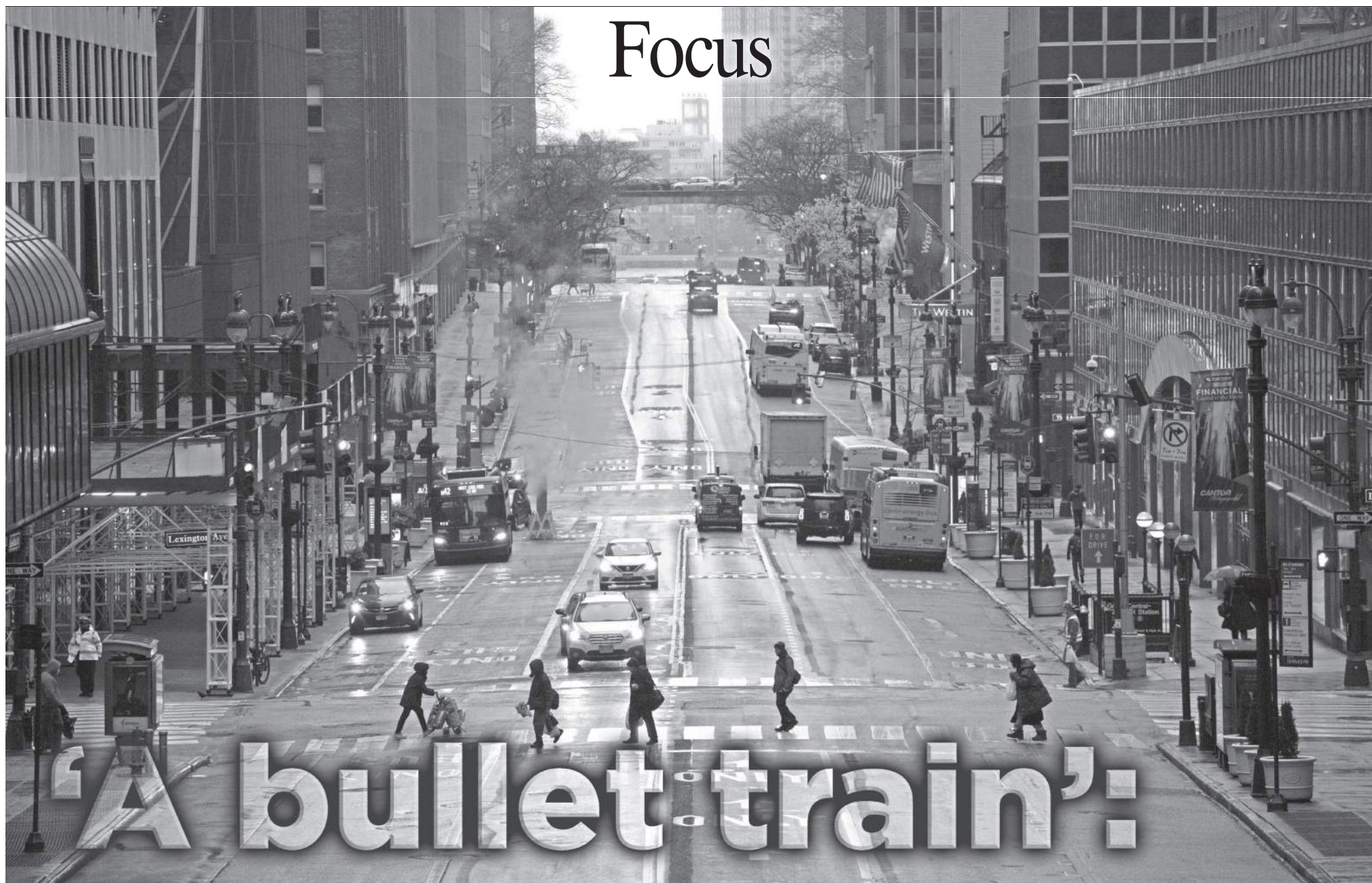
BERLIN (AP)—The European Space Agency said Tuesday that it is putting eight of its spacecraft into hibernation as it scales down operations during the coronavirus outbreak. The agency said it is further reducing the already limited number of staff working on site at its mission control in Darmstadt, Germany. As a result, the instruments and data collection on some space

probes are being temporarily stopped. They include the Cluster mission, consisting of four probes launched in 2000 to investigate Earth's magnetic environment and how it is affected by solar wind; the ExoMars Trace Gas Orbiter launched in 2016 to investigate the red planet's atmosphere; Mars Express, launched in 2003 and which has been capturing images of the surface of Mars; and the Solar Orbiter mission launched last month to observe the sun. The eight spacecraft are among 21 currently flown from Darmstadt. The agency said one staff member there has tested positive for COVID-19.

50 Nigerian soldiers killed in deadly Boko Haram ambush

MAIDGURI, Nigeria (AP)—Boko Haram extremists killed at least 50 soldiers during an ambush in northern Yobe state, one of the deadliest recent attacks on troops in Nigeria, according to military sources. The ambush happened as the military tried to launch an offensive against the Boko Haram militants, according to a military official with knowledge of the operation that started over the weekend. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media about the matter. The soldiers initially were able to fight back and escape, the official said. They launched another offensive a day or so later and were then attacked from the rear at a place near the village of Goneri called the Gorge, he said.

Focus



Virus peak may come soon, swamp hospitals

AP
Commuters cross 42nd Street in front of Grand Central Terminal during morning rush hour, Monday, March 23, 2020, in New York.

By JOHN MINCHILLO and MARINA VILLENEUVE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK (AP)—Gov. Andrew Cuomo sounded his most dire warning yet about the coronavirus pandemic Tuesday, saying the infection rate in New York is accelerating and the state could be as close as two weeks away from a crisis that sees 40,000 people in intensive care.

Such a surge would overwhelm hospitals, which now have just 3,000 intensive care unit beds statewide.

The rate of new infections, Cuomo said, is doubling about every three days. While officials once projected the peak in New York would come in early May, they now say it could come in two to three weeks.

“We are not slowing it. And it is accelerating on its own,” he said during a briefing at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center. “One of the forecasters said to me we were looking at a freight train coming across the country. We’re now looking at a bullet train.”

New York officials have been racing to essentially double their hospital capacity to up to 110,000 beds. Cuomo now said there could be a peak need of 140,000 beds.

There were more than 25,000 positive cases in New

York state and at least 210 deaths, according to state figures. Most of the cases and deaths have been in New York City, an emerging worldwide hotspot in the outbreak.

White House officials urged people who have left New York City amid the outbreak to self-quarantine for 14 days after their departure because of the widespread rate of infection.

New York officials are planning to add at least 1,000 temporary hospital beds at the Javits Center for non-COVID-19 patients and thousands of beds elsewhere. But Cuomo said “they’re nowhere near” the number that will be needed. The state also faces shortages of ventilators and protective equipment for medical workers.

WANTED: VENTILATORS

New York has 7,000 ventilators, the breathing machines that can keep COVID-19 patients alive, and Cuomo says the city needs 20,000 more of them in a matter of weeks.

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said 4,000 ventilators were coming from the federal government in the next two days, with half go-

ing to the city.

But Cuomo said many more were needed, and he called Tuesday for a national push to send all available ventilators to New York immediately.

After the expected surge of patients in the state passes, those ventilators could then be redeployed to the next hot spot.

“I will take personal responsibility for transporting the 20,000 ventilators anywhere in this country that they want, once we are passed our apex,” Cuomo said. “But don’t leave them sitting in a stockpile.”

Peter Pitts, a former associate commissioner at the Food and Drug Administration and president of the New York-based Center for Medicine in the Public Interest, said that ventilators — about the size of two old VCR machines — are certainly portable. But he said there would have to be regional or national coordination of such a surge.

Dr. Nicholas Hill, chief of pulmonary and critical care at Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston, said he was skeptical anyone with ventilators would be willing to give them up.

Asked if Tufts would temporarily lend out ventilators to New York, he responded suc-

cinctly, “Hell, no.”

“If we knew with certainty we could get them back when a spike was coming, I might be willing to talk more,” he said. “But no one is going to be able to guarantee that.”

He said that with what’s going on in New York, “we have to think that we’re going to be next, and we don’t want to be caught with our pants down.”

TRANSIT SERVICE REDUCTION

New York will reduce subway service beginning this week in the wake of an 87% drop in ridership, Metropolitan Transportation Association officials said Tuesday. The changes will begin to go into effect Wednesday.

Subway service will be reduced by about 25%, chief operating officer Mario Peloquin said. Morning and evening peak service would be preserved. Service also will be reduced on the MTA’s bus lines, the Long Island Rail Road and MetroNorth Railroad.

Ridership has fallen more than 70% on all of the MTA’s services, chairman Pat Foye said. A shortage of available employees has caused hundreds of subways to be delayed.

THE TOLL

The death toll from COVID-19 has left people in mourning around the state.

In Brooklyn, Dez-Ann Romain, 36, principal of a school for students who had struggled in traditional high schools, was remembered as a dedicated educator who gave her all to her students and staff.

In the Albany area, 92-year-old technology pioneer Walter Robb died just days after being admitted to the hospital with a severe cough and being put on a respirator. Robb had spent years working at General Electric Co., pushing advancements in imaging equipment used in health care.

Alan Finder, a former reporter at The New York Times, was remembered for his decency and kindness. Current Times reporter Kevin Sack said on social media that Finder was a terrific reporter, a calming presence and one of the “menschiefs” guys around.

The losses included those who had made New York City their artistic home. Renowned American playwright Terrence McNally, whose work was a mainstay of New York theater, died at 81 in a Sarasota, Florida, hospital.

PROSECUTOR TESTS POSITIVE

Suffolk County District Attorney Timothy Sini tested positive for the coronavirus, according to Newsday.

Sini has been at home under self-quarantine for about a week and received his test results late Monday night, chief of staff Justin Meyers told the newspaper. The prosecutor has no symptoms and has been working from home.

INMATES FREED AS VIRUS SPREADS

The plight of inmates in jails thought to be tinderboxes for rapid spread of the virus continues to weigh on city officials.

On Tuesday, de Blasio said city jails were immediately releasing about 300 inmates serving a year or less for non-violent offenses. The city has already freed several dozen people who are at high-risk of severe illness and who committed low-level offenses.

The city jail system, which includes the notorious Rikers Island complex, said Tuesday night that 52 inmates and 30 staff members have tested positive for the disease.

Environment

By DEBORAH SULLIVAN
BRENNAN
THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

SAN DIEGO—A new ocean protection plan sets out steps to safeguard California's coast against rising seas, while shoring up public access and building coastal economies.

The Ocean Protection Council on Wednesday approved the Strategic Plan to Protect California's Oceans, a five-year roadmap for navigating threats including climate change, pollution and loss of biodiversity. The council, a policy body within the California Natural Resources Agency, wanted to distinguish the new plan from previous editions, by focusing on specific timelines and funding sources.

"They wanted to make sure that the strategic plan wasn't the same old plan, but was really an action plan to really protect California's coast and ocean," said Mark Gold, executive director of the council. "The coast is so important to who we are in California, not just from a biodiversity perspective, but a cultural perspective, people using the beach, and the blue

economy."

The plan focuses on four key areas: climate change resilience, ocean access and equity, biodiversity, and the blue economy. As the effects of ocean warming emerge on California's coast, tackling climate change impacts is essential to meeting the other three goals.

"The International Panel on Climate Change recently found that coastal ecosystems are under stress from ocean warming, intensified marine heat waves, ocean acidification, loss of oxygen, and sea-level rise, and that impacts to species, biodiversity, and ecosystem services are already being observed," the report states. "Never before has our state's ambition and effectiveness (for) protecting the ocean and coast been more important."

The plan relies on existing dollars from previous state bonds and other mechanisms, such as the environmental license plate fund, for its first two years of operations, Gold said. After that, council members are looking to a \$4.75 billion climate resilience bond that Gov. Gavin Newsom plans to float in November, which would include a half-billion dollars for ocean and coastal action, Gold said.

The meeting, held in Sacramento, drew representatives

from the Port of San Diego, the state Department of Fish and Wildlife and State Water Resources Control Board, along with host of environmental and marine business groups. Aside from requests for specific technical or language changes, speakers were broadly supportive of the plan.

"California is a powerhouse worldwide in blue technology," said Michael Jones, president of TMA BlueTech, a marine industry incubator in San Diego. "We need to be setting a standard for the world. We think this is a very timely approach, and congratulate your work."

Other acknowledged that the plan sets ambitious goals on swift timelines, but said the situation demands bold measures.

"I do think that they are a stretch, and that's good," said Jonathan Bishop, Chief Deputy Director. "We should be stretching."

Council member Jordan Diamond, executive director of the Center for Law, Energy, and the Environment (CLEE) at the UC Berkeley School of Law, said the support of other agencies and nonprofits will be key to the plan's success.

"The emphasis is on setting ambitious visions, but then working with partners to achieve them," she said. "This is not something we

can do on our own. This is all dependent on partnerships."

The first section of the plan lays out strategies to safeguard California's coastal communities and ecosystems from the effect of climate change, ranging from sea level rise and beach erosion to declines in fisheries and kelp forests. Its first target is ensuring that California's coast can withstand at least 3.5 feet of sea-level rise by 2050.

That includes developing "nature-based" solutions, including restoring wetlands and creating oyster beds that can buffer the effects of sea level rise. It also references managed retreat, a lightening rod in climate change dialogues in San Diego. Gold said consideration of managed retreat should focus more on public infrastructure, such as the Coaster train or Port of San Diego, instead of private property.

Another target proposes an "infrastructure resiliency plan focused on state roads, railroads, wastewater treatment plants, water supply facilities, ports and power plants by 2023."

"What can we do to ensure that the port, which is an economic engine for San Diego, is protected," he said. "So we're trying to reframe that dialogue. Managed retreat is a tool of last resort."

The plan also aims to minimize ecological effects of ocean warming by "protecting, restoring or recreating" 10,000 acres of coastal wetlands by 2025. And it calls for updating water quality rules to combat ocean acidification and low ocean oxygen, reduce sewage discharge to the ocean, and increase water reuse.

In the second section, the plan sets goals for engaging California's tribal communities and governments in ocean policy, and providing "equitable, convenient, and affordable access to coastal natural resources" and policy-making, and "partnering with underserved communities" on ocean and coastal resources and management. Responding to speakers' recommendations, the council also added language to the plan to increase diversity in its own organization.

The portion on biodiversity calls for completing a 10-year assessment of the success of California's network of Marine Protected Areas, and developing plans to protect and restore tide pools, seagrass beds and kelp forests. It urges measures to protect whales and sea turtles from ship strikes and entanglement in fishing gear, with a goal of zero deaths from those hazards. And it calls for reduc-

tions of plastic pollution, with a goal of eliminating trash into the ocean by 2030.

In another target specific to both San Diego recreation and science, the biodiversity section also aims to modernize the harmful algal bloom notification network to provide real time data by 2022, and predictions by 2024. Gold said the council just provided \$1.3 million for that effort, led by Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla.


Other targets would identify and eradicate invasive marine species, and curtail contaminants harmful to marine organisms or human health.

The final section aims to build upon the economic engine of the "blue economy." Its targets include developing a traceability system for sustainable seafood, supporting fishing communities and coastal tourism, and encouraging development of offshore wind energy.

State Assemblyman Mark Stone, who serves on the council, said those hard targets give the plan teeth, and also set accountability standards for the plan, and the potential state bond measure.

"It's more than aspirational, but lays out a real roadmap for steps that can be taken," he said. "This will be the document against which progress is measured."

AP
Southern California's Palos Verdes Estates, an affluent community with brick rooftop luxury homes, off Pacific Coast Highway with scenic views of the Pacific Ocean.



ocean
protection plan charts
course for defending
California coast

Life & Style

Taylor Swift's publicist takes aim at Kim Kardashian in feud

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Kanye West and Taylor Swift public beef has reignited again with the ongoing feud now involving his wife and Swift's publicist.

Swift's publicist, Tree Paine, fired back Monday night at Kim Kardashian West, who had defended herself after someone released a video, clipped into segments, of the full 25-minute conversation of Kanye West and Swift discussing his song "Famous." Kardashian West posted several tweets Monday to address Swift who said in a statement earlier in the day on Instagram

that she was illegally recorded in the "manipulated" video.

West was condemned for a lyric in which he called Swift a bitch in his 2016 song "Famous." The rapper said Swift gave her blessing to use the lyric during a phone call, but the singer denied ever hearing the lyric.

The new footage of the phone call between West and Swift was posted online from an unknown source Friday night.

The new clips seem to corroborate Swift's claims that West didn't tell her the full lyrics of the song. But they also show West repeatedly asking Taylor for her approval of a



lyric in which he raps: "I feel like me and Taylor might still have sex, Why? I made that

bitch famous." Swift does tell West she thinks it's funny, just as the rapper said when the

song first was released.

Previously, Kardashian West seemed to vindicate her hus-

band—months later—by releasing snippets of the call where Swift appeared to approve the lyrics. She said in a tweet Monday that Swift lied through her publicist that "Kanye never called to ask for permission."

In response, Paine said in her tweet Monday that West did not call to get the lyric approved from Swift. She said West asked Swift if she could release the song on her Twitter account but she declined.

2 more publishers withdraw from BookExpo convention

NEW YORK (AP)—Three of the top five publishers in the U.S. will not be attending BookExpo, the industry's national convention. Organizers already had pushed back the event from May to July in the hopes of easing concerns about the coronavirus pandemic.

Simon & Schuster and HarperCollins Publishers both announced Tuesday that they had dropped out, citing the coronavirus, and Penguin Random House announced last week that it would not go.

BookExpo usually attracts tens of thousands, from authors and editors to librarians and agents. It is to be held this year at New York City's Jacob Javits Convention Center, which the state of New York is currently converting into a medical facility in anticipation of a surge of patients requiring

hospitalization. The state has the country's highest number of reported cases.

BookExpo event manager Jenny Martin said in a statement that she was "disappointed" by the publishers' decisions, but the convention was still scheduled to take place.

"I want to assure everyone that we are working closely with the Javits Center to ensure the health and safety of our customers," Martin said. "It is noble what they are doing, opening their doors to overflow patients so that those who are infected with COVID-19 will have focused care in the city's hospitals. We are all doing the best we can during these times, and what that means for BookExpo is to work hard to provide the place that gives our customers the tools to bounce back from this."

Gaga says wrong time for 'Chromatica'; Rock Hall reschedules

From finding ways to help others cope to sheltering in place to canceling events, here's a look at some of the ways the entertainment industry is reacting to the spread of the coronavirus, which most people recover from but can cause severe illness in the elderly and those with preexisting medical conditions.

Gaga shelves album

Lady Gaga has shelved her forthcoming album "Chromatica" for now, saying it's not the right time amid a global fight with the coronavirus.

Gaga said on her social media pages Tuesday that "after a lot of deliberation, I've made the incredibly tough decision to postpone the release of Chromatica. I will announce a new 2020 release

date soon."

The album had been scheduled for release on April 10. Gaga already had a set of Las Vegas concert dates tied to the release canceled, and said Tuesday that she had also planned a surprise set at the Coachella music festival, which was also previously postponed.

"This is such a hectic and scary time for all of us," Gaga said. "And while I believe art is one of the strongest things we have to provide joy and healing to each other during times like this, it just doesn't feel right to me to release this album with all that is going on during this global pandemic."

Halted Hall induction back on for fall

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony,

which was also pushed back from the spring over coronavirus fears, has been rescheduled for fall.

The ceremony, featuring commemorations of the late artists Whitney Houston and The Notorious B.I.G., as well as performances honoring Depeche Mode, the Doobie Brothers, Nine Inch Nails and T-Rex, was originally planned for May 2 has been reset for Nov. 7.

Film festivals find new ways

Film festivals whose in-person versions were canceled are forging ahead in other ways.

Turner Classic Movies is holding a Special Home Edition to air from April 16-20, featuring classic films like "Singin' in the Rain," "Casa-

blanca" and "North by Northwest" and interviews with from festivals past with film legends from Peter O'Toole to Faye Dunaway.

The TCM Classic Film Festival attracts film buffs to Hollywood each year, but this year's edition was canceled due to the spread of the coronavirus.

And South by Southwest, one of the first major entertainment events to cancel over the coronavirus, announced its awards Tuesday for the small films that would have screened there. The grand jury prize for narrative feature went to 22-year-old Cooper Raiff's "S—house," a micro-budget coming-of-age comedy about a college freshman struggling with the transition. (PR)

Decades-old loan remains unpaid even after threats

DEAR ABBY: I am an 83-year-old mother of four. I have been living with my second husband now for 21 years. Nineteen years ago, my husband loaned one of my daughters and her husband a large sum of money so they could buy a house and pay off bills and judgments. All the necessary paperwork for the loan was signed at the time of the closing with a lawyer present, and it was agreed they would pay us back a certain amount every month.

After a few years of mostly regular repayments, the payments dwindled, although they continued to buy expensive electronics and other items. Several years have passed now, and a few checks and cash payments have arrived, but only after much begging.

Our lawyer sent them a letter a few years ago telling them to pay up or we would sue them. It resulted in their not seeing or talking to us for a couple of years. We REALLY need the money now. Maybe she's hoping we will die. What do you suggest we do at this point? Her brother and sisters don't want to get involved.

LOVING, GIVING MOM

DEAR MOM: I am truly sorry. But because your other children refuse to become involved in convincing your dead-beat daughter and her husband to pay what they owe you, you have no other choice but to contact the lawyer who draft-

ed the loan agreement and instruct him to follow through.

DEAR ABBY: My husband retired four years ago. At first he seemed to enjoy not having to go to work. Then he got bored and needed something to do. For some reason, he bought an old Corvette to restore. I was supportive, until I found out it's an expensive hobby. Finding and buying all the replacement parts costs money.

He has been working on that car for 3 1/2 years now. As soon as he gets it ready to drive, something else breaks. Meanwhile, he has bought four more old Corvettes "to work on." Our backyard looks like a junkyard.

We haven't had a vacation trip since he retired, not even a weekend to the mountains. He argues that we can't afford it, but he spends thousands on those old cars. It has become an obsession for him, and it's "driving" ME crazy. Any suggestions?

CORVETTE WIDOW IN THE SOUTH

DEAR WIDOW: Healthy couples discuss large purchases before making them. What your husband is doing is destructive to your relationship. It almost seems as though he is using his hobby as a way of avoiding spending time with you. My suggestion is that you and your husband find the money to consult a marriage counselor because what's going on is unfair to you. And if you need a vacation, consider taking one by yourself or with a friend.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



DEAR ABBY: I will be turning 50 soon. How do I explain to my husband and parents that I just want to spend it alone? Is there something wrong with me for feeling this way?

BIRTHDAY WISH IN IOWA

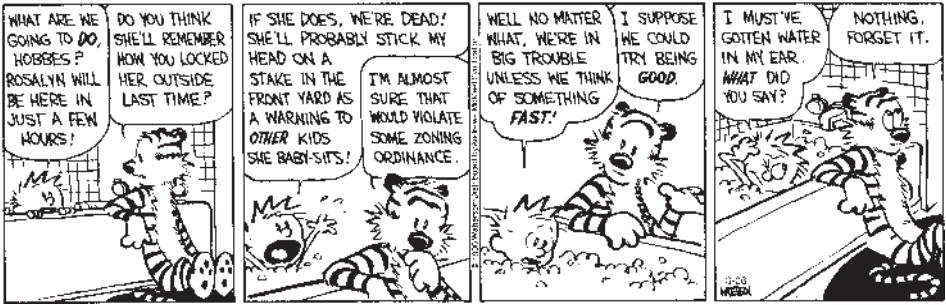
DEAR BIRTHDAY WISH: People react to their birthdays, especially milestone birthdays, differently. Some are elated, while others feel depressed. Not everyone wants a lot of "hoopla." If you prefer spending your 50th birthday quietly, your wish should be respected, and you should not have to go into a long explanation about why.

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Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



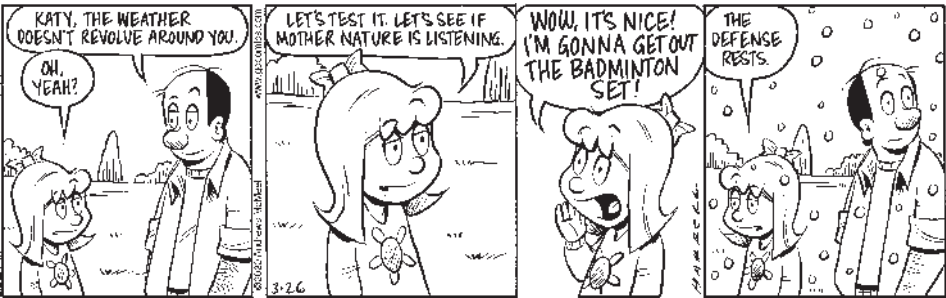
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



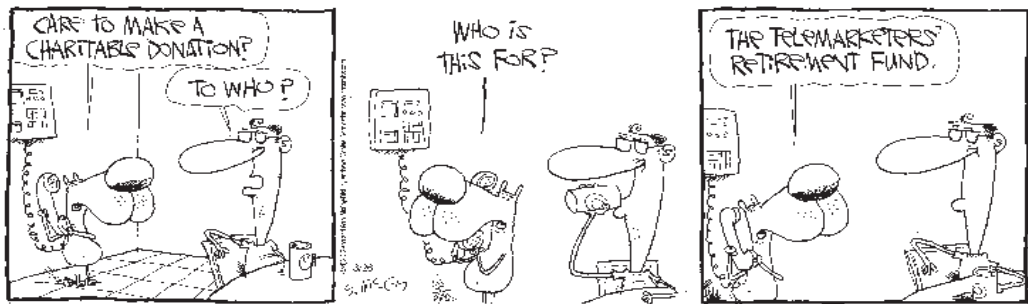
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Biting remark

5 Turkish title

8 Men-only

12 Out of the storm

13 Tierra — Fuego

14 Story

15 Ham's dad

16 Little rascal

17 Airline to Tel Aviv

18 Mexican shawl

20 Eden evictee

22 Where assets might be listed

26 Energetic

29 Contented sound

30 Female hare

31 Friend

32 Greyhound vehicle

33 Peel

34 Singer Rawls

35 Danson of "The Good Place"

36 Guitar parts

37 Calculator symbols

40 Bitty biter

41 Deli sandwich

45 Pan handler?

47 CEO's deg.

49 BLT spread

50 Gilpin of "Frasier"

51 Novelist Rand

52 Stretches (out)

53 Take five

54 Profit

55 Ranch visitor

DOWN

1 Pro-scribes

2 Skin soother

3 Caboose

4 "Don't Worry, —"

5 Farewell (Bobby McFerrin hit)

6 Jewel

7 Llamas' kin

8 Rob

9 Like some yeshiva studies

10 Carte lead-in

11 Solidify

19 Layer

21 Homer's cry

23 Riyadh resident

24 Monastery man

25 Beatty and Rorem

26 Tropical tree

27 "The Time Machine" people

28 Clog-busting tools

32 Groom's attendant

33 Began again

35 Airport screening org.

36 SSW opposite

38 Ill-suited

39 18th president

42 Capital of Azerbaijan

43 Kept tabs on

44 Proboscis

45 YMCA class

46 Haw precursor

48 "See ya!"

Solution time: 24 mins.

Yesterday's answer 3-26

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Keira Knightley, 35; Kenny Chesney, 52; Martin Short, 70; Steven Tyler, 72.

Happy Birthday: Refuse to let your emotions take over. Rational behavior will count when it comes to getting ahead and avoiding trouble. Too much of anything will be your downfall, and discipline and preparation will be your path to success. Make a conscious effort to do what's right and best for you. Your future depends on how hard you work, your stamina and your originality. Your numbers are 6, 19, 23, 27, 32, 41, 46.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): A quick reaction will lead to disappointment and regret. Don't speak in haste or send the wrong message. Nurture relationships instead of destroying them, and you will navigate your way to a better position. Simplicity and moderation are in your best interest. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Be firm, and you will get your way. Be willing to adjust if it will help to move your plans forward faster. Don't argue over something that doesn't matter. Stubbornness won't help you get ahead. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Use your Gemini charm as your go-to tool, and you'll get your way, but don't promise something you will not want to honor. Consider a partnership that shows potential. Offer your services with a well-defined plan in mind. ****

CANCER (June 21-July 22): A secretive approach to something you are pursuing is in your best interest until you have

everything in place. Your reputation may be at risk if you meddle or spread rumors based on hearsay. Personal growth is favored. **

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Consider what type of attention you want before you step into the spotlight. Making waves instead of keeping the peace will lead to a negative response. If you're going to accomplish something, be sensitive to others and true to your word. *****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't decide while under pressure. A financial loss or additional responsibilities due to a mistake will interfere with being able to take advantage of something better. Say no to a joint venture, and yes to doing your own thing. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Strive to make the biggest gain in the shortest period. Holding back how you feel will stifle your ability to take advantage of an opportunity. Take a practical, budget-friendly step forward, and don't look back. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Make a change at home. You will get the boost you need to expand your interests if you invest. Say what's on your mind, clear the air and make your move. Don't repress your creativity or your ability to be productive. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Strive for a friendly and comfortable environment. Don't let peers, relatives or neighbors bring you down or make you anxious. Associate with people who are sensitive to your needs and share common beliefs and interests. Choose peace over discord. *****

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You'll appear weak if you back down. Review the facts, and take care of matters before they have time to escalate. Say no if someone asks for too much or takes you for granted. Use your skills to get what you want. **



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Question what you are doing, and make adjustments based on common sense. Don't give up, especially when a positive lifestyle will help you achieve your objective. Take the first step; you'll have the discipline to reach your destination. ****



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Refuse to be a chameleon. Turn your attention to something productive and mentally stimulating, and you'll avoid taking a turn that benefits someone other than you. Change begins within, and doing your own thing is your ticket to freedom. ***

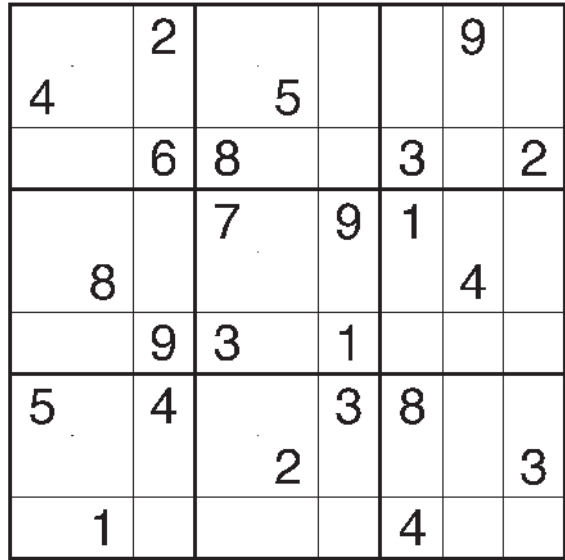
Birthday Baby: You are prepared, responsible and prompt. You are sensitive and caring.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



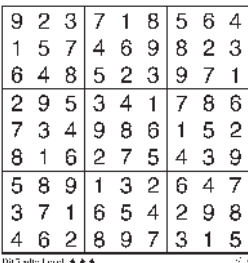
Difficulty Level ★★★

3/26

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer



Difficulty Level ★★★

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

SKIRTS Solution: 5 letters

Y H F A S H I O N A T R A T L
T T U K I U E N W E A V E D E
R G L F O L D S E C U K N T A
O N L B L A E W C N C R U I T
P E L O O W U E I O I C F G H
S L A D N A S F P D D L A H E
R D C Y G S O O N E E K B T R
O O E L R O L U N P R C A R O
L O T R M K O A B A U S I E S
O P I I A R H U L U T N C A N
C E C D A S T B M E C T W R O
S R O P L T P L A I D K E A L
O T A L O A F E R S N O L R Y
S R E N G I S E D E N I M E N
W B S P O R T S W E A R O L L

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Accessories, Bell-shaped, Black, Body, Buckle, Buttons, Cargo, Colors, Cute, Denim, Designers, Dirndl, Fabric, Fashion, Folds, Full, Gear, Hula, Lace, Leather, Length, Linen, Loafers, Long, Micro, Mini, Model, Nylons, Pattern, Plaid, Pocket, Polka Dots, Poodle, Roll, Runway, Sandals, Sportswear, Sporty, Suede, Tartan, Tight, Uniform, Weave, Wide, Wool, Wraparound
Yesterday's Answer: Over the Rainbow
The NEW Treasury 39 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

STUMPED?

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Olympic delay will upend other major events

TOKYO (AP)—The expected yet stunning decision Tuesday to postpone the 2020 Summer Olympics because of the coronavirus could have a ripple effect on other major events, most notably the world championships for track and swimming.

While the International Olympic Committee has yet to set a new date for the Tokyo Games other than “not later than summer 2021,” the revised calendar undoubtedly will heavily impact two of the event’s biggest sports.

The 2021 world athletics championships are scheduled for next summer in Eugene, Oregon, which is constructing a new stadium that will seat 30,000 on the site of historic Hayward Field. The next world aquatics championships are set for roughly the same time in Fukuoka, Japan.

Paul Doyle, one of track and field’s most influential agents, believes the track worlds should be postponed until the summer of 2022, in the midst of what is essentially an off year for the sport.

“That makes the most sense,” he said. “No global championships in 2022, so if we move it to 2022 that solves a lot of problems. If you put them in the same year, it’s not just having Olympics and worlds the same year. How do you select the teams?”

This will be the first time the every-two-years event has been held in the United States.

Now, it’s all about the timing.

The track worlds are scheduled for Aug. 6-15, which obviously won’t work if the Tokyo Olympics are pushed back a full year to roughly the same spot on the calendar as this year’s games—July 24-Aug. 9.

If the Olympics are held in April or May, an idea that seems to be under serious consideration, the track worlds could press forward with their plans.

Even so, Doyle said it would be better to delay the world championships to 2022.

“I don’t think putting them in the same year makes a lot of sense, especially when really 2022, it should be relatively easy,” he said. “I don’t know all the intricacies of the city of Eugene. I would imagine that having a little more time might be good.”

Swimming also holds its biggest event outside the Olympics in odd-numbered years.

The 2021 aquatics championships—which in addition to swimming also include diving, water polo, artistic swimming, open-water swimming and the non-Olympic sport of high diving—are set for July 16-Aug. 1 in Fukuoka, which is about 675 miles (1,088 ki-



A taxi passes a large banner promoting the Tokyo 2020 Olympics in Tokyo, Tuesday, March 24, 2020. IOC President Thomas Bach has agreed “100%” to a proposal of postponing the Tokyo Olympics for about one year until 2021 because of the coronavirus outbreak, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Tuesday.

nastics, which stages its world championships every non-Olympic year.

The 2021 event is set for Copenhagen, Denmark, but not until Oct. 18-24, so it shouldn’t be directly affected by the Olympic postponement. Training schedules and other competitions would have to be altered, however.

The world governing body said it will do “everything necessary to adapt its events calendar to fit the new dates” of the Olympics.

Swimming coach Bob Bowman, best known for his work with retired Olympic great Michael Phelps, said he’s looking forward to the chance to prepare for the Olympics without a major event the year before. In addition to the every-other-year worlds, the Pan Pacific Championships are held two years ahead of the Olympics.

Would-be Olympians and their coaches have gone from days and weeks of mulling one sort of uncertainty raised by the coronavirus pandemic—Are the Tokyo Games going to be held as scheduled?—to a whole other set of questions now that an indefinite postponement is official.

What will the qualifying rules be? Some sports already finished that process. Others are in a total state of flux.

Will the delay force athletes to contemplate abandoning the Olympics altogether, because retirement beckons? And, if so, what will they decide?

“More than anything, it pushes back what life was going to offer,” said Cat Osterman, who turns 37 next month and is the oldest player on the U.S. softball team.

“My husband and I have talked about the possibility of having a kid after July of 2020,” said Osterman, a pitcher who is one of two holdovers from the team that collected a silver medal at the 2008 Olympics, “and now that has to go into effect after 2021.”

Or as Belgian cyclist Greg Van Avermaet, the 2016 Olympic road race champion who turns 34 in May, put it, “The postponement means I will be another year older, which isn’t ideal, but I know I will be as motivated as ever.”

A look back at Olympics that never were

The Tokyo Olympics have been postponed a year to 2021 because of the coronavirus outbreak, but it’s worth remembering that the games have been rocked by upheaval before.

Three other times, the games were canceled altogether because of World War I (1916) and World War II (1940 and 1944) -- and in those latter two quadrennials, both the Summer and Winter Games were shelved.

A look at the Olympic Games that never were:

1916

Berlin was set to host the 1916 Summer Olympics (the Winter Games weren’t founded until 1924), beating bids from Alexandria, Amsterdam, Brussels, Budapest and Cleveland, according to GamesBids.com.

The German Empire even constructed a dazzling new facility to serve as the centerpiece of the games. Known as Deutsches Stadion, it opened well ahead of the games in 1913.

After the First World War

erupted in July 1914, preparations carried on for a while since no one expected the hostilities to last another two years. But the horrific war lasted until 1918, eventually forcing the Olympics to be canceled.

The Berlin stadium was demolished some two decades later and replaced by a new structure that would serve as the main stadium for the 1936 Summer Games, when the German capital finally got another chance to host. Of course, Adolf Hitler had risen to power by then, leaving those games to be remembered ominously for promoting the Nazi regime that would eventually lead the world into an even more catastrophic war.

1940

In an era when the selected nation got the option of hosting both the Summer and Winter Games in the same year, Japan was a surprising choice as the first non-Western country to be awarded the Olympics. Tokyo was to be the summer host, with Sapporo

ro getting the winter version.

Again, war got in the way.

Japan invaded China in 1937, prompting the Asian country to surrender its hosting duties the next year after some military leaders reportedly demanded that venues be constructed from wood because metals were needed for the war effort.

The International Olympic Committee hastily named Helsinki, runner-up in the initial bidding, to serve as summer city, with the winter events going to 1928 host St. Moritz, Switzerland. A dispute with Swiss organizers led to one more change, as the Winter Games were shifted a second time to Garmisch-Partenkirchen, the German host in 1936 alongside Berlin.

Of course, after World War II erupted in September 1939 with Germany’s invasion of Poland, the Olympics were canceled altogether. Tokyo would eventually get a chance to host the Summer Games in 1964—still the first Asian city to receive the honor—while Sapporo

landed the 1972 Winter Games.

1944

Shortly before the outbreak of World War II, and after all that scrambling to find replacement hosts for 1940, the IOC awarded London the 1944 Summer Games in balloting that also included Athens, Budapest, Detroit, Helsinki, Lausanne, Montreal and Rome.

With England not a feasible host for the Winter Games, that event was awarded to Cortina d’Ampezzo, Italy.

The 1944 Olympics never had a chance. World War II dragged on until the following year.

London would then be awarded the 1948 Summer Games, the first in a dozen years and staged in austere conditions as the city continued to recover from the war. In 2012, the British capital became the first three-time host.

St. Moritz hosted the Winter Games for a second time in 1948, while Cortina eventually got another shot with the 1956 Winter Olympics.

defiantly told The Associated Press by phone.

Marculescu said the IOC is considering two options for the Summer Games, which will have a direct impact on FINA’s next move.

“If they do it in summer, then we (will have to change) the dates (of the

world championships),” he said. “If they do it at the beginning of the year, maybe we don’t need to touch the dates. The only thing we do, we wait to see what is the IOC decision.”

If the IOC goes with a summer date, FINA would have to decide whether to hold its world championships be-

fore or after the Olympics.

A fall date seems most likely, since it wouldn’t conflict with the U.S. Olympic swimming trials that are usually held about a month ahead of the games.

“Before or after?” Marculescu asked rhetorically. “I don’t know.”

The other member of the Olympics’ Big Three is gym-



NFC West looks loaded for another year



LOS ANGELES (AP)—

The NFC West was a diabolically difficult division for most of the past decade, and it only seems to be getting tougher.

The NFL's winningest division last season will be stacked again in the fall with four franchises determined to win now. Three teams that posted winning records in 2019 will be joined by what looks like a much-improved version of the Arizona Cardinals, who are among the biggest winners of the early free-agent signing period after adding star receiver DeAndre Hopkins to a West already loaded with playmakers.

This ruthless division has produced five of the NFC's past eight Super Bowl representatives, including the past two. The Los Angeles Rams made that Super Bowl trip less than 14 months ago, but a lackluster offseason and some questionable salary cap management suggest they already might be headed to the division basement despite a star-studded roster under innovative coach Sean McVay.

The NFC West has been hyper-competitive since 2012, and it looks even more unfor-giving now.

"It's a very, very tough division again," Seattle Seahawks coach Pete Carroll said last month. "There's no doubt about it. And I don't think anybody wants to play (the NFC West). It will make us better."

Led by the 13-win NFC champion San Francisco 49ers, the four NFC West teams combined last year for 38 regular-season victories, the most in the league. The West was the NFL's only division with three winning teams, and it would have had three playoff teams under the seven-team postseason format that goes into effect in the upcom-



AP
In this Dec. 15, 2019, file photo, Arizona Cardinals quarterback Kyle Murray (1) gets away from Cleveland Browns linebacker Mack Wilson (51) during the second half of an NFL football game in Glendale, Ariz.

ing season.

This fall, all four teams from one division could theoretically make the playoffs. If any division is going to accomplish that improbable feat, the NFC West certainly seems to have the best chance, based on these four teams' recent body of work and their prospects for the year ahead.

But it would be easier if the Rams, Seahawks, Niners and Cardinals didn't have to play each other six times a year.

The NFC West has had six wild-card playoff teams and seven conference finalists in the past eight seasons alone, but it hasn't been dominated by anybody for long. All four teams have won the division within the past five years, and the Rams are the only repeat champions in that half-decade.

The most consistent winners have been the Seahawks,

who have won at least nine games in each of the past eight seasons, missing the playoffs just once in that span. Carroll's remarkable consistency is even more impressive with the tumult of free agency, but the Seahawks have kept many key pieces in place from their 11-5 season—and they're still in the running to keep pass rusher Jadeveon Clowney in free agency.

The defending NFC champion Niners are still a powerhouse despite the loss of defensive tackle DeForest Buckner, a cornerstone of their Super Bowl defense during coach Kyle Shanahan's long-awaited breakthrough season. They got a first-round pick for Buckner, and they retained Arik Armstead and Jimmie Ward.

San Francisco's nine-win improvement turnaround last season wasn't surprising to its

three NFC West competitors, who saw McVay orchestrate a seven-win improvement by the Rams in 2017.

Coach Kliff Kingsbury and the Cardinals went 5-10-1 last year, but they're a popular pick to improve sharply this year after swinging a trade for Hopkins and adding additional talent in a fruitful free-agent signing period.

"It's definitely motivating, there is no doubt," Kingsbury said of the Niners' surge. "To see what Kyle has built there, and staying consistent to his culture and who he wanted to be and hanging with it through some tough quarterback injuries. Being in their division, playing them and seeing what they have, it's definitely motivation for our organization."

If the Cards can improve their defense, they're in position to make the leap partly

because they have one of the most valuable salary cap management tools in the league: a solid quarterback on a rookie contract.

Kyle Murray passed for 3,722 yards and 20 touchdowns last season, and the overall No. 1 pick has plenty of room for improvement. He will be in his second season in Kingsbury's offense, and he'll be getting the ball to Hopkins, Larry Fitzgerald, Christian Kirk and Kenyan Drake.

So where does that leave the Rams, who missed the playoffs despite going 9-7 last year?

Big changes are underway in LA despite the Rams' three straight winning seasons under McVay. The now-34-year-old wunderkind dismissed a major portion of his staff after missing the postseason, and he hired untested career assistant Brandon Staley to run his defense.

The job is even tougher because Los Angeles' biggest offseason addition might be its new logo and uniforms. The Rams have lost running back Todd Gurley, defensive tackle Michael Brockers, leading tackler Cory Littleton, edge rusher Dante Fowler and elite nickel back Nickell Robey-Coleman in the past two weeks alone.

But they've still got Aaron Donald, Jalen Ramsey and one of the NFL's best collections of receivers for Jared Goff with McVay pulling the offensive strings. It's too early to write off the Rams—but in the NFC West, good isn't good enough.

"This has always been a tough division since I've been here, so that's no sur-

prise," Goff said recently. "We know our toughest regular-season challenges are in the NFC West."

Panthers release Newton

The Cam Newton era is over in Carolina, as the Panthers released the 30-year-old quarterback after nine seasons.

The move became a mere formality after the Panthers made it clear last week they were moving on from Newton by giving him permission to seek a trade and then agreeing to a three-year, \$63 million contract with free agent quarterback Teddy Bridgewater about 90 minutes later.

On Monday night, Newton posted on his Instagram account that he was "hungrier" now because he is "unemployed."

"Cam has meant a lot to this organization and the Carolinas," Panthers general manager Marty Hurney said in a statement Tuesday. "Everyone saw his performances on the field. I had the privilege of seeing how hard he worked off the field, and his commitment to this team when no one was watching. He's the ultimate competitor and it physically hurts him to lose. He willed this team to victory on many occasions and will always be considered one of the greatest players in the history of this franchise."

Hurney added: "His contributions to this team, this community and the game of football will leave a lasting impact on our organization."

The breakup did not end well.

US Soccer: Settling women's lawsuit priority

NEW YORK (AP)—The newly installed president and chief executive officer of the U.S. Soccer Federation used their first news conference to state that settling a lawsuit filed by women's national team players is a top priority.

"A lot of damage has been done, and I think we are going to have to rebuild that trust and rebuild the relationship. It is not going to happen overnight," President Cindy Parlow Cone said Tuesday. "It's going to take a lot of effort and time and energy from the U.S. Soccer side to rebuild that trust, not only with our U.S. women's national team play-

ers, but with our fans and everyone engaged in the sport."

Players claim they have not been paid equally to the men's national team and asked for more than \$66 million in damages under the Equal Pay Act and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. A trial is scheduled for May 5 in federal court in Los Angeles.

"The solution here is clear, simple, and unequivocal: equal pay," responded Molly Levinson, spokeswoman for the players.

In legal papers filed this month ahead of the trial, the USSF claimed the women's team didn't have the physical

abilities or the same responsibilities as the men's team. That sparked a furor that included an on-field protest by players wearing their warm-up jerseys inside out to hide the USSF crest. The outcry led to the resignation of USSF President Carlos Cordeiro and caused the federation to change its lead law firm.

Chief legal officer Lydia Wahlke has been placed on administrative leave, which was first reported Tuesday by ESPN. Parlow Cone said an outside firm has been retained to review USSF decision-making that led to the briefs

"to see where that process broke down." She hopes to schedule settlement talks.

"I don't think a trial is good for either party or for soccer," Parlow Cone said.

A 41-year-old World Cup and Olympic champion, Parlow Cone had been the USSF vice president before Cordeiro quit on March 12.

"The comments and the language in the last filing," Parlow Cone said, "I think not only hurt our relationship with our women's national team, but hurt women and girls in general, and as a former national player, they were personally hurtful to me."



Kerr not sure if Warriors will play when NBA resumes



CALIFORNIA—The Warriors have 17 games left on their 2019-20 regular-season schedule.

How many of those 17 they get to play when the NBA resumes the season is unknown at this time.

The NBA suspended the season March 12 in an attempt to slow the spread of the coronavirus. Nearly two weeks later, we're not any closer to figuring out when the league will pick back up.

Coach Steve Kerr appeared on Howard Beck's "The Full 48" podcast this week, and he spoke about what might happen when the NBA starts playing again.

"Look, for us, our season is basically over," Kerr said. "If the league was somehow to start up again, it's very unlikely we would be playing regular season games given that they'd be in such a time crunch. Who knows?"



AP
In this March 5, 2020 file photo, Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry (30) is defended by Toronto Raptors guard Norman Powell (24) during an NBA game in San Francisco.

"But I'm feeling for all the teams in the fight, in the thick of it for a championship, that are in the playoff race, teams that have put so much into this, and this was obviously a year for us where we were trying to get healthy, trying to develop some young guys. So I'm not concerned about our guys, our team. I feel sorry for the teams that are kind of in limbo right now."

Whenever the NBA playoffs begin, the Warriors won't be involved for the first time since 2012. They own the worst record in the NBA this season (15-50) and are the only team that has been mathematically eliminated from NBA playoff contention.

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last match before the suspension of the league, the Kanoa striker got two goals in a losing effort versus TanHoldings, while her two other goals were registered in their 2-4 loss to Southern United last Feb. 22 and another defeat against TanHoldings last Feb. 29.

Joining Francisco and Casarino in the Top 5 in the race for the Golden Boot award are MP United's Mauryzon Tybaco, Kanoa Football Club's Paulyn Joyce, and Southern United's Keisha Deleon Guerrero. The three players

have four goals apiece with Tybaco getting three in their 6-2 win over Kanoa last Feb. 15 and the lone goal in their loss to the same squad early this month. Joyce delivered all her four goals in their second round win against MP United, while Deleon Guerrero had one apiece in their 0-4 loss to TanHoldings and 2-0 win over MP United and two in another victory over MPU.

Not far behind Deleon Guerrero, Tybaco, and Joyce are MP United's Audrey Castro, Southern United's Nathanette Blas, Kanoa's Kristelle Itaas and TanHoldings' Kaithlyn Chavez, who have three goals each.

USA Basketball's next move hinges on new schedule

NEW YORK (AP)—USA Basketball is hoping that the rescheduled Tokyo Olympics will be held around the same time next year as they would have been this year.

Otherwise, an already-complicated situation could get even tougher for coaches and players.

USA Basketball managing director Jerry Colangelo said Tuesday that he has "hit the pause button" on planning for the next Olympics. Colangelo noted that there's nothing now to do besides waiting to see exactly when the games in Tokyo

will be held in 2021—and if the new schedule will conflict with the NBA schedule.

"It's pretty simple, isn't it? We either have NBA players or we don't," Colangelo told The Associated Press. "And if we don't, we'll look at the other options."

For now, Colangelo is committed to remain in his role through 2021. So is the coaching staff; U.S. coach Gregg Popovich of the San Antonio Spurs is the head coach, with assistants Steve Kerr of the Golden State Warriors, Lloyd Pierce of the Atlanta Hawks

and Jay Wright of Villanova.

But again, that's all schedule permitting.

This summer's Olympics were to begin July 24, which typically is part of the NBA offseason. When the International Olympic Committee announced the postponement of this summer's games on Tuesday, a decision made because of the global coronavirus pandemic, it said the delay would last "no more than one year."

That wording seems to suggest the possibility of an earlier-than-usual Olympics. And if the Tokyo Games are held in

April, May or June that could mean the U.S. plans change considerably.

"We're hopeful that this is going to take place in the same timeframe next summer as it was scheduled for this summer," Colangelo said. "There are a lot of things that have to be done totally out of our control. We're a follower in this situation. We're dealing with the NBA, FIBA, the USOC, the International Olympic Committee, etc., etc. Here's what we have to wait for now: What are the dates? Once they set the dates, then we will go into action."

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facility or not this season, *Saipan Tribune* looked back at the experiences of individuals who had been or are still part of one of the most successful grassroots sports programs in the CNMI.

Rachel Abrams debuted in the All Schools when she was in second grade at the Koblerville Elementary School and she smoked the competition in her first try while running on the wrong lane.

"My most memorable school meet would have to be my first meet. I was 2nd grade at Koblerville and I was very nervous and excited to run," Abrams said.

"I remember asking the gun starter where to stand and where's the finish line and he told me just keep running. I was so excited that I think I ended up running on the wrong lane, but it didn't matter because I ran so fast that I



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Runners get ready at the starting line during last year's Public School System/McDonald's All Schools Track and Field Championships at the Oleai Sports Complex track oval. This year's All Schools qualifiers are on hold due to the COVID-19.

didn't interfere with the other runner. After feeling the rush of the adrenaline pumping and coming out in first place I knew that track was something that I wanted to keep doing," added Abrams, who was also into high jump besides

doing sprints back then.

The former Umang later became a perennial member of the CNMI National Team, as she represented the Commonwealth in the 2014 and 2018 Micronesian Games, 2011 Pacific Games, 2012 and 2014

IAAF World Indoor Championships and 2012 IAFF World Junior Championships.

Another athlete who donned CNMI colors in regional competitions, Tania Tan, picked the 2017 edition of the All Schools meet as

the most memorable one—even though they had to race in the dusty and make-shift track at the Hopwood Middle School grounds.

"It was my sophomore year. It was my most memorable because I remember I trained hard because I ran cross country for the first time during that school year and just started running, so I wanted to do even better during track season," said Tan, who won medals for the CNMI in the middle distance races in the 2018 Micronesian Regional Championships.

"In the end, it paid off when I won the 800m, 1500m, and 3,000m events and came in second in the 400m event. Our 4x400m relay team (Saipan International School) also came in first and I got to run it with three of my good friends: Isabel Dickinson, Malika Miyawaki, and Anika Snyder. Our team that year was one of the strongest and I had a lot of fun running with them," the Fordham University cross country

team member said.

Ron Snyder coached Tan and company and is a busy man every track season. Snyder and the Geckos had numerous successes in the various age group competitions in the All Schools in the past several years, but more than winning races, what left a mark in him was the athletes and organizers' determination to go ahead with the event despite the logistical challenges.

"Being a mid-distance/long distance specialist, I think I have to go to last year's meet. Yutu had destroyed the overhead lights and it was dark already. But the coaches decided to move forward with the 3,000m," the SIS headmaster said.

"We drove our cars and trucks all around the track and the athletes raced along the track by car lights. What a great example of grit from our students and creative problem solving from the coaches and NMA," Snyder added.



Olympic
delay will
upend other
major events

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NFC West
looks loaded
for another
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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

ALL SCHOOLS TRACK MEET

Success stories recalled



SAIPAN TRIBUNE

In this May 2011 file photo, Rachel Abrams competes in the 100m race in the Public School System/McDonald's All Schools Track and Field Championships at the Oleai Sports Complex track oval.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Saipan International School's Isabel Dickinson, Anika Snyder, Tania Tan, and Malika Miyawaki enjoy a light moment before competing in the 4x100m relay race in the 2017 Public School System/McDonald's All Schools Track and Field Championships at the Hopwood Middle School grounds.

By this time, sans the COVID-19 crisis, Northern Marianas Athletics would have started the qualifying events for the Public School System/McDonald's All Schools Track and Field Championships.

The annual meet for elementary, middle school, and high school students along with several other sports competitions have been either suspended or canceled in

response to the CNMI government's call to avoid holding events that draw crowds to decrease the risk of the potential spread of



the deadly coronavirus in the Commonwealth. This move and other safety measures will remain in effect until further notice and

with student-athletes uncertain whether they will be able to step into the Oleai Sports Complex's track and field

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Darts league postponed

The opening of the Saipan Electronic Darts Association Bud Light League 2020 has been postponed due to the COVID-19 crisis.

The league was supposed to start as early as March 10 with competition in the Tuesday B Division, but with organizers following the CNMI government's call to avoid joining mass gathering, such as a sports event, at this time of the pandemic, matches in all groups have been suspended indefinitely.

Six teams have registered for Tuesday B Division with 6JMS Hella Dart B originally slated to play Sands Jam'n Dem Hol in the opening week, while the two other

matches scheduled were 6JMS Thunder Darts B versus 6JMS Champions and 6JMS Shaka over Jonny's Rev With Kev.

In the Masters Division, four teams are vying for the title—6JMS Dangerous Drag, 6JMS Pythons, 6JMS Mafia 1, and Amari's Pin Shooters.

The C Division, meanwhile, has lured the most squads with nine. Leading the list are three 6JMS-backed teams—Hella Dart C, Dart Vaders, and Oba Danks.

Completing the field are Rivers No Skill Just Luck, Safehouse Twister Tribe, Safehouse Deez Dartz, Jonny's Step Bro's, 9-Eleven Bull-It, and Amari's Hit & Run. (Roselyn B. Monroyo)



Casarino pulls away

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

TanHoldings Football Club's Jannah Casarino earned a sizeable lead in the Golden Boot race in the girls U17 division of the 2020 NMIFA Spring Youth League.

From a slim advantage against Kanoa Football Club's Sharmaine Francisco, 6-5, Casarino went further ahead, 13-7, thanks to her seven-goal output in their 11-3 thrashing of the former's squad last March 14 at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Before unloading one goal after another in their lopsided

game against Kanoa a week bore Northern Mariana Islands Football Association suspended the league indefinitely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Casarino's three goals were spread evenly in TanHoldings' first three matches. She delivered two goals each in their 4-0 and 4-1 wins over Southern United last Feb. 15 and March 7, respectively and in their 6-3 triumph over Kanoa last Feb. 29.

Meanwhile, Francisco's best production so far this season was her hat trick in their 7-1 victory over MP United last March 7. In their

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

TanHoldings Football Club's Jannah Casarino is ahead of a Southern United player as they chase the ball during their girls U17 game in the 2020 NMIFA Spring Youth League earlier this month at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.